



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
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STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF BUDGET AND FINANCE
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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 WAYS AND MEANS
ON
HOUSE BILL NO. 1378, H.D. 2, S.D. 1

April 3, 2025
10:01 a.m.

Room 211 and Videoconference

RELATING TO THE STATE FOUNDATION ON CULTURE 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, S.D. 1:

- Amends Chapter 9, HRS, by adding a section to Part I to allow the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts (SFCA) to acquire any property or interest in property to hold, maintain, use, and operate; and to sell, lease, or otherwise dispose to support SFCA's mission and for maintenance, security, operations, or renovations of facilities controlled by SFCA.
- Establishes the Performing Arts Grants Program (PAGP) within 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."

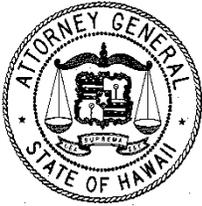
- Amends Section 9-21, HRS, to amend the purpose of SFCA to include the coordination, planning, promotion, marketing, and execution of performing arts events.
- Amends Section 9-22, HRS, to amend the funding source of the State Art Museum from the Works of Art Special Fund (WOASF) to appropriations from the Legislature, federal grants and subsidies, voluntary contributions, and funds received pursuant to Section 9-3(7), HRS.
- Amends Section 103-8.5, HRS, to: establish a cap on the amount transferred into the WOASF; amend the allowable use of the WOASF to only costs related to the acquisition, planning, design, and construction of works of art; require agencies receiving capital improvement appropriations to calculate their proportionate share of the total annual amount transferred into the WOASF; and 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 general intent of the bill to establish a tax compliant process on the utilization of bond proceeds to support the WOASF, and to create funding stability for SFCA general operations. However, implementing a cap on transfers into the WOASF will be very difficult to implement because currently, capital improvement program (CIP) appropriations do not specify the amount of the total appropriation that is for construction. Further, the proposed amendments seem to imply that works-of-art

allocations are to be made from each project regardless of whether the CIP project is implemented or not.

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, S.D. 1, it is difficult to determine if the PASF would be self-sustaining.

Thank you for your consideration of our comments.



**WRITTEN 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, S.D. 1, RELATING TO THE STATE FOUNDATION ON CULTURE AND THE ARTS.

BEFORE THE:

SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS

DATE: Thursday, April 3, 2025

TIME: 10:01 a.m.

LOCATION: State Capitol, Room 211

TESTIFIER(S): **WRITTEN TESTIMONY ONLY.**

(For more information, contact Alyssa-Marie Y.H. Kau,
Deputy Attorney General, at (808) 586-0626)

Chair Dela Cruz and Members of the Committee:

The Department of the Attorney General provides the following comments.

This bill (1) establishes the Performing Arts Grants Program within the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts (SFCA) to support performing arts, (2) expands SFCA's responsibilities to include the coordination, planning, promotion, marketing, and execution of performing arts events, (3) amends the permitted uses of the Works of Art Special Fund (WASF) and the amounts required to be transferred by agencies into the WASF, (4) amends the fundings sources for the State Art Museum, and (5) allows SFCA to acquire, hold, and own property.

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 may jeopardize 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 10, line 20, through page 11, 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 (page 11, line 12, through page 12, 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.

Further, the Senate Committee on Transportation and Culture and the Arts added an amendment in Senate Draft 1 (S.D. 1) that would allow for SFCA to acquire, and hold, and own property (page 3, line 17, through page 4, line 6). The original "purpose of the [bill was] to: (1) [e]stablish the Performing Arts Grants Program under the [SFCA]'s existing grant program, to support performing arts in the State; (2) [c]larify the scope of [SFCA]'s responsibilities to include the coordination, planning, promotion, marketing, and execution of performing arts events; and (3) [a]ppropriate funds to provide grants under the Performing Arts Grants Program. H. Stand. Comm. Rep. No. 681. The amendment made in S.D. 1 appears to be related to neither the Performing Arts Grants Program nor the clarification of the scope of SFCA's responsibilities and may give rise to a germaneness challenge under article III, section 15, of the Hawai'i State Constitution. See *League of Women Voters of Honolulu v. State*, 150 Hawai'i 182 (2021). To address this issue, the Department suggests deleting the amendment, or in the alternative, if the Committee passes this bill as currently drafted in S.D. 1, then three new readings in each house be given on this bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments.



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Chairperson
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Testimony of the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts
Before the
SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS
Thursday, April 3, 2025 Conference Room 211 at 10:01AM
HOUSE BILL 1378 HD2 SD1
RELATING TO THE STATE FOUNDATION ON CULTURE AND THE ARTS

Chair Dela Cruz and members of the Committee,
The SFCA **OPPOSES** H.B.1378 H.D.2 S.D.1 which amends the Works of Art Special Fund and shifts much of the Art in Public Places program funding to a General Fund appropriation for the following reasons:

- With the current Federal cuts to Hawaii programs, we are concerned if the Art in Public Places program and positions are moved from Special Fund to State general funds and there is a State general fund shortfall, there will be no alternative funding source to support the SFCA and therefore the agency will cease to function.
- Regarding the works of art special fund and proceeds from G.O. bonds - we are in discussion with Budget and Finance and believe any changes can be addressed in the Operational Expenditure Plan and with a Comptroller Memorandum by tracking the source of the bond proceeds and monitoring its use rather than cutting programs and amending 103-8.5, which would destabilize arts and culture funding in the state.
- Rather than limiting the use of the Works of Art Special Fund as outlined in HB1378HD2 SD1, the 2014 legislative audit and many Senators have proposed expanding the use of the works of art special fund. We should consider exploring that option in this time of Federal financial uncertainty.
- 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 in the state budget bill **without amending 103-8.5.**
- Regarding H.B.1378 H.D.2 S.D.1 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:
- ~~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]~~

Based on these issues, we do not see how H.B. 1378 H.D.2 S.D.1 will benefit the people of Hawaii and question its intent. This dedicated funding source if dismantled, would eliminate the assurance of culture and arts funding for generations to come.

April 1, 2025

Senate Committee on Ways and Means
Senator Donovan M. Dela Cruz, Chair
Senator Sharon Y. Moriwaki, Vice Chair

Subject: Strong Opposition to HB1378

Aloha Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Moriwaki, and Members of the Committee,

As Chair of the Board of Commissioners for the Hawai'i State Foundation on Culture and the Arts, I write to express my strong opposition to House Bill 1378 SD1 (HB1378). This bill is reckless, short-sighted and destructive. It would eliminate the only dedicated and sustainable funding source for the arts in Hawai'i, dealing devastating blow to sector that is essential to our economy, cultural heritage and community well-being.

Economic Consequences: HB1378 will rip funding away from a proven economic driver. The Works of Art Special Fund fuels a thriving creative economy, providing jobs, supporting local businesses, and ensuring that state dollars stay in Hawai'i to benefit its people. Eliminating it will mean lost jobs, shuttered programs and a diminished cultural sector that will negatively impact tourism, education, and commerce.

A Threat to Cultural and Community Institutions: The arts are not a luxury—the arts are the heart of Hawai'i's identity. The arts preserve and celebrating our diverse heritage. The Works of Art Special Fund enables public access to the arts and cultural programs that educate, inspire and bring communities together. HB1378 threatens to dismantle this foundation by stripping resources from organizations that provide essential cultural enrichment.

Disparate Impact on Hawai'i's Communities: The elimination of this funding will disproportionately affect Native Hawaiian, immigrant and underserved communities that rely on arts programs for education, cultural expression and social engagement. The loss of funding will further widen existing disparities, making it even more difficult for these communities to access arts and cultural opportunities.

No Justification, No Transparency: This bill offers no valid rationale for dismantling a funding mechanism that has long benefited Hawai'i for decades. There has been no public engagement with the stakeholders most affected by this legislation. Any changes to arts funding should be approached with transparency, collaboration and a clear understanding of the broader consequences.

HB1378 is a deeply flawed and harmful piece of legislation that must be stopped. I urge you to reject this bill and preserve the Works of Art Special Fund, ensuring that Hawai'i's culture, economy, and communities continue to thrive.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I appreciate your dedication to serving the people of Hawai'i, and I urge you to stand in opposition to this harmful bill.

Mahalo,



Konrad Ng, Ph.D.
Chair, Board of Commissioners
Hawai'i State Foundation on Culture and the Arts



EXECUTIVE CHAMBERS
KE KE'ENA O KE KIA'ĀINA

JOSH GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR
KE KIA'ĀINA

Senate Committee on Ways and Means

Thursday, April 3, 2025

10:01 a.m.

State Capitol, Conference Room 211 and Videoconference

In Opposition

H.B. 1378 HD2, SD1 Relating to the State Foundation on Culture and Arts

Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Moriwaki and members of the Senate Committee on Ways and Means:

The Office of the Governor respectfully opposes H.B.1378 H.D. 2, S.D. 1 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.



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

JOSH GREEN, M.D.
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SYLVIA LUKE
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DIRECTOR

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Statement of
JAMES KUNANE TOKIOKA
Director

Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism
before the
SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS

LATE

Thursday, April 3, 2025
10:01 AM

State Capitol, Conference Room 211 & Videoconference
415 South Beretania Street

In consideration of
HB1378 HD2 SD1
**RELATING TO THE DEPARTMENT OF BUSINESS, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
AND TOURISM**

Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Moriwaki, and members of the Committee. The Department of Business, Economic Development & Tourism (DBEDT) provides comments on HB1378, HD2, SD1, which establishes a new Performing Arts Grants Program and Special Fund, and makes various amendments to Section 103-8.5, Hawaii Revised Statutes, modifies the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts' (SFCA) responsibilities and methods of financing.

DBEDT supports the establishment of a Performing Arts Program and Special Fund and the intent of the bill to establish a compliant process on the utilization of the bond proceeds and create stability within the SFCA. However, as respectfully covered by Budget and Finance, utilization of bond proceeds are subject to specific tax regulations of the Internal Revenue Service and could have unintended consequences when expenditures to not align.

DBEDT understands there are concerns raised by SFCA and community in Section 6 of the bill, regarding amending the Works of Arts Special Fund, which would alter the method of financing (MOF) of current positions funded through Section 103-8.5 to general funds.

We encourage continued dialogue between the SFCA, state agencies, the arts community and lawmakers to strike a balance, amend where necessary, while sustaining the intent and purpose of the one percent law passed by the Legislature in 1989. In uncertain economic times, it is crucial to maintain this valuable resource for the preservation of Hawai'i's arts and cultural community and its legacy, today and in the future.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.



Sen. Donovan M. Dela Cruz, Chair
Senator Sharon Y. Moriwaki, Vice Chair
Committee on Ways and Means

Thursday, April 3, 2025
10:01 AM Conference Room 211

RE: **HB1378 HD2 SD1** – Relating to Arts Funding/SFCA – **Strongly Oppose**

Dear Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Moriwaki, and Members of the Committee,

The Chamber of Sustainable Commerce represents over 460 small businesses and entrepreneurs across the state that strive for a triple bottom line: people, planet and prosperity. As small business owners who believe we can strengthen Hawaii's economy without hurting workers, consumers, communities or the environment, we ask Committee members to oppose HB1378 which dismantles the Works of Art Special Fund and the percent-for-art law, the cornerstone of our state's investment in the arts. By slashing arts funding, HB1378 would crumble the state's commitment to cultural and economic sustainability in Hawaii, and have long-term reverberating effects.

The Arts as an Economic Engine

Recent data published by the ASPCSA shows that the arts and cultural nonprofit sector in the US grew at more than twice the rate of the total economy between 2022 and 2023, contributing more than \$1.2 trillion to the economy. Cutting arts funding weakens local business, reduces tourism revenue and eliminates jobs in sectors that support Hawaii's unique identity.

The Arts are Essential to Mental and Emotional Wellbeing

The arts are far more than an aesthetic pursuit—they are a vital part of maintaining and improving mental and emotional well-being. From providing therapeutic outlets for self-expression to reducing anxiety, depression, and trauma, the arts offer powerful tools for healing, resilience, and social connection. Support for the arts is not just about enriching culture, but also about fostering healthier, more connected communities. Investments in the arts are investments in the overall well-being of individuals and society as a whole.

Improved Academic Motivation and Achievement

The Arts and Achievement in At-Risk Youth: Findings from Four Longitudinal Studies (Catterall, 2013) study revealed that students with a high level of involvement in the arts performed better on standardized tests in reading and mathematics compared to students with limited arts involvement. The study emphasized that arts education plays a crucial role in closing the achievement gap for underserved students. The *Arts and Achievement study* also found that students involved in arts

Hawaii Legislative Council Members

Joell Edwards
Wainiha Country Market
Hanalei

Russell Ruderman
Island Naturals
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programs show increased enthusiasm for learning, higher levels of school attendance, and greater persistence in achieving academic goals and graduating high school.

A 2010 report by the Wallace Foundation titled "*The Impact of Arts Education on Workforce Preparation*" emphasizes that arts education programs help students build important non-cognitive skills, such as perseverance, time management, and teamwork, which contribute to improved academic and social outcomes. The NEA's *Creativity Connects* report in 2018 highlights the relationship between arts education and long-term career outcomes, noting that students with a strong background in the arts tend to have higher earnings and greater career satisfaction.

Public investment in the arts leads to better educational outcomes by improving academic performance, enhancing student engagement, fostering social and emotional development, and increasing graduation rates. The evidence from numerous studies underscores the importance of supporting arts education as a means to not only enhance students' academic experiences but also to prepare them for successful futures in the workforce and society. Investing in the arts is not just a cultural expenditure, but a strategic investment in the future success of students and communities. So... **Why does the state consistently show intent to reduce its investment in the arts?**

Colonization and Cultural Erasure

Given Hawaii's history of colonization, the cutting of arts education can be viewed as a form of cultural erasure that perpetuates a colonizing mindset. Reductions in funding for the arts disproportionately affect schools in low-income and minority communities, where arts programs often provide opportunities for cultural expression and identity reinforcement.

In *Education and the Arts: Towards a Colonizing Mindset*, the author explores how educational policy decisions that cut arts funding are directly linked to historical practices of cultural assimilation and erasure, particularly for Indigenous populations. The reduction of arts education limits the ability for students to engage with their heritage and cultural practices, thereby perpetuating the dominance of mainstream (often Western) cultural values. Arts education plays an important role in affirming cultural identity, especially for minority and Indigenous students. The removal of funding for these programs often reflects and contributes to a broader colonial agenda that undervalues non-Western cultures and ways of knowing. Studies show that when arts education is marginalized, it deepens the sense of alienation for students from historically oppressed groups.

At a time when federal funding uncertainties loom, economic hardships skyrocket and mental and emotional wellbeing continues to decline, not is not the time to cut essential arts funding. We ask committee members to protect our future and protect the Works of Art Special Fund.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony. Respectfully submitted in firm opposition to HB1378 HD2 SD1.

DATE: April 2, 2025

TO: COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS
The Honorable Senator Donovan M. Dela Cruz, Chair
The Honorable Senator Sharon Y. Moriwaki, Vice Chair, and
Members of the Committee

FROM: Micah A. Kāne, Chief Executive Officer & President

RE: Testimony in Opposition for HB 1378 HD2 SD1, Relating to the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts
Date: Thursday, April 3, 2025 at 10:01am
Place: Conference Room 211 and videoconference

The Hawai'i Community Foundation (HCF) strongly opposes House Bill 1378 HD2 SD1 regarding the works of arts special fund (Section 6). HCF has a long history of partnering with the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts (SFCA) to increase access to arts education at public and charter schools through the Artists in the Schools program. This educational program is supported by this fund and restricting use of the fund will greatly reduce access to arts education for keiki throughout the state. Philanthropy does not have sufficient resources to address the potential shortfall.

If enacted, HB 1378 HD2 SD1 will restrict the use of this fund to costs related to the acquisition, planning, design, and construction of works of art. Capping the revenue and shifting State Foundation on Culture and the Arts' operating funding and funding for interpretive work which includes arts education 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 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 SD1 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 and culture community which contributes significantly to the well-being of our whole community.



hawaiicomunityfoundation.org

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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 by providing dedicated state funding. If there are concerns regarding tax-exempt bonds, which in part contribute to the works of art special fund, we urge working with SFCA outside of the legislative session to find a resolution that does not amend the law and risk decreasing dedicated arts funding. A change to the law may hinder access to arts and culture for our communities.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify in opposition to HB 1378 HD2 SD1.

To: COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS

Hearing Date/Time: Thursday, April 3, 2025

Re: Testimony in Strong Opposition of HB1378-HD2

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

Aloha Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair, 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



**Outside Witness Testimony Submitted by Creative West in opposition to HB1378-HD2-SD1
Relating to the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts
Prepared for the Hawai'i Senate Ways and Means Committee
April 2, 2025**

Senator Dela Cruz, Chair, and Members of the Hawai'i Senate Ways and Means Committee:

I'm writing on behalf of Creative West, a regional arts service organization serving 16 states and jurisdictions including Hawai'i, to respectfully oppose HB1378-HD2-SD1. This bill introduces major concerns—especially the restriction of the Works of Art Special Fund and lack of clarity around its governance and funding with new unplanned proposals to amend its focus.

Hawai'i State Foundation on Culture and the Arts is one of Creative West's participating state arts agencies and we believe an exceptional partner in providing much needed support and leadership for the arts community in the state. The State Foundation is distinctive, among peers nationally, in its expansive arts in public places programming, innovative arts education programs, and support of traditional and contemporary arts in a cross-cultural context.

The Works of Art Special Fund is a critical component of the State Foundation's mandate overall and has been particularly important in supporting the Foundation's efforts to expand support of Native Hawaiian artists. From 2020 to 2023, \$2,902,653.61 from the Works of Art Special Fund has been allocated to support acquisitions, contracts, exhibitions, social media, and conservation related to Native Hawaiian works of art. Because of the staff services required in deepening relationships with the Native Hawaiian artists and curators, it is vitally important that the State Foundation retain latitude in the use of Works of Art Special Fund resources for *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.*

Therefore, the lack of clarity surrounding HB1378-HD2-SD1's unplanned proposals to amend its focus, poses a significant threat. These ambiguities not only jeopardize recent gains in support of Native Hawaiian artists but also create instability for essential programs like

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303.629.1166 | www.wearecreativewest.org



Artists-in-the-Schools and Art in Public Places, potentially disrupting the established and effective support systems that are crucial for Hawaii's cultural and educational well-being.

Thank you for your consideration.

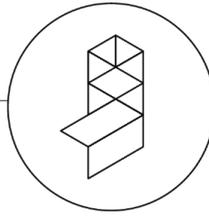
Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "David Holland", written in a cursive style.

David Holland
Deputy Director, Creative West

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303.629.1166 | www.wearecreativewest.org

Creative West is supported in part by an award from the National Endowment for the Arts.



1 April 2025

Honorable Members of the Committee,

I write to you as the Executive Director of Hawai'i Contemporary, the organization behind the Hawai'i Triennial—the state's largest, multi-site public exhibition of contemporary art. On behalf of our organization and the broader creative community, I respectfully urge you to oppose Senate Bill 1378.

Why We Strongly Oppose SB1378:

1. The Bill Threatens Long-Term Arts Funding

Senate Bill 1378 proposes restrictions to the Works of Art Special Fund—the only consistent, dedicated, and sustainable source of public funding for arts and culture in Hawai'i. Eliminating or weakening this vital fund would have devastating consequences: significant cuts to already underfunded programs, loss of jobs, and diminished opportunities for artists, organizations, and communities across the islands. Rather than scaling back, we must reinforce our investment in Hawai'i's cultural future.

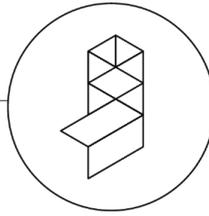
2. Arts & Culture Are Integral to Hawai'i's Identity and Economy

The arts are not ancillary—they are essential. They preserve and amplify our cultural heritage, strengthen education, and contribute substantially to the state's economic and social well-being. Hawai'i's identity is deeply intertwined with its artistic and cultural expression; removing dedicated support would erode this core part of who we are and who we present to the world.

3. General Funds Are Neither Stable Nor Reliable

While SB1378 proposes a temporary general fund appropriation, it fails to offer a sustainable long-term solution. General funds are vulnerable to shifting priorities and economic fluctuations. With ongoing uncertainty surrounding federal funding, there is a high risk that the arts will be deprioritized in future budgets—leaving cultural programs without the support they need to survive, let alone thrive. Any dilution of the percent-for-art law would disproportionately impact Native Hawaiian and local artists, galleries, and nonprofits.

Hawai'i Contemporary is a direct beneficiary of the Works of Art Special Fund. With support from the SFCA, the Hawai'i Triennial has expanded its reach, now spanning 14 sites across three islands. The 2025 edition (HT25), which opened on February 15, exemplifies the transformative potential of this investment—not just in exhibitions, but in community engagement, education, and economic impact.



The Triennial draws over 100,000 visitors each cycle, generating significant economic activity across the islands. The 2022 Hawai'i Triennial, with a budget of \$3.6 million, yielded an estimated economic impact of \$1.7 million from local attendees and a remarkable \$60.82 million from out-of-town visitors, according to data from AmericansForTheArts.org.

HT25 elevates Hawai'i's global profile as a hub for creativity, innovation, and cultural exchange. It attracts culturally engaged travelers, fosters international partnerships (e.g., the Art Summit), and boosts local visibility through strategic media collaborations. This level of impact would not be possible without stable, dedicated funding.

Investing in the arts is not only culturally enriching—it is economically smart. The arts fuel tourism, stimulate local business activity, and create jobs across sectors. A vibrant arts ecosystem enhances Hawai'i's appeal to skilled workers, entrepreneurs, and investors, serving as a powerful engine for economic diversification and long-term resilience.

Artists and creative professionals are also drivers of innovation. Their ideas, ventures, and collaborations spark new industries and solutions, positioning Hawai'i to lead in an increasingly creative global economy.

Senate Bill 1378 puts Hawai'i's cultural future and economic potential at risk. The Works of Art Special Fund is not merely a budget line—it is a lifeline for our creative community and a catalyst for statewide prosperity. I urge you to reject SB1378 and stand with the artists, educators, cultural leaders, and communities who make Hawai'i a place of enduring creativity and innovation.

Sincerely,

Rosina Potter
Executive Director
Hawai'i Contemporary



April 2, 2025

Aloha Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Moriwaki, 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 continued strong opposition to HB1378 HD2-SD1.**

While the original intention of this bill—to establish a performing arts grant program—is welcomed and supported by many, HB 1378 HD2-SD1 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 deeply 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 HB1378 HD2-SD1 in its current form.

Why Now Is the Wrong Time for This Change

1. HB1378 HD2-SD1 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 vote NO to HB1378 HD2-SD1 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 being more prominent.

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

HB-1378-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/1/2025 11:32:29 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

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

Comments:

Aloha Committee Members,

I am submitting this testimony to respectfully OPPOSE HB1378-HD2-SD1. The bill introduces major concerns and should not be passed. Of specific concern are the changes to the Works of Art Special Fund and the lack of clarity around governance and funding going forward.

Kindly do NOT pass this bill, protect the integrity of the SFCA, and show your support for and understanding of the hundreds of thousands of Hawai'i residents who engage with culture and the arts, find their mental health through it, are inspired by it, and seek to bring beauty to our lives through expressions and study of culture and the arts.

Vote NO on HB1378-HD2-SD1.

Mahalo nui loa,

Maile Loo, Executive Director

HB-1378-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/2/2025 9:09:06 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Chloe Hartwell	Testifying for Board of Directors, Hawai'i Contemporary	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Testimony in Opposition to HB1378-HD2-SD1

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, 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. We 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.** 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. Mahalo for the opportunity to submit testimony.

Summary

We urge you to oppose HB1378 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,

Chloe Seto Hartwell, Hawai'i Contemporary Board Member
Wailupe, O'ahu

Piia Aarma, Board Chair

Maile Meyer, Vice-Chair

Masako Shinn, Secretary

Kristen Chan, Board Member

Gloria Lau, Board Member

Diane Chen, Board Member

Anne Swayne Keir, Board Member

Ben Dookchitra, Board Member

Patricia Chang Moad, Board Member

HB-1378-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/1/2025 3:55:43 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Sonia Nelson	Testifying for Donkey Mill Art Center	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha e to my district Senator Kanuha, Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Moriwaki, and Members of the Ways and Means Committee:

As a nonprofit professional, a resident and tax payer of West Hawai'i, and a lifelong advocate of the arts and education, I am writing to urge you either to **oppose HB1378-HD2-SD1**.

This bill will cut dedicated funding used for arts education by 100%, and replaces it with less than half the current budgeted amount in general funds. If passed, this cut would have an extremely detrimental impact not only to our organization, but to the thousands of people in West Hawai'i that we serve each year at the Donkey Mill Art Center with critical arts programs, free gallery exhibitions and community events.

The Donkey Mill Art Center has been delivering high quality arts education programming for 30 years including through the Artists in the Schools program. Thanks specifically to fund support from the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts (SFCA), we are **able to serve over 400 elementary students** in local area schools this year alone . And half of the AITS-granted schools still do not have a dedicated arts specialist on staff. If arts education funding is cut by these extremes, many students will not have any specialized arts education time in their school day. Not only is this extremely inequitable, but countless studies have proven that arts experiences result in improved mental health, stronger community relationships, and creative problem-solving skills. Our keiki deserve *more* than what we are currently offering them, *not less*. By cutting arts education funds, we would be doing a disservice to them, our community and our future community.

Additionally, through the Mill's curatorial work, Hawai'i State has acquired and recognized many artists from rural communities, including Hawai'i Island, at various career stages. It provides them supplemental income through the sale of their work. SFCA's **Art in Public Places** Collection directly supports artists and it reflects the evolving dialogue of arts across Hawai'i—a record of our shared history and humanity. The artwork managed and displayed by SFCA is not only enjoyable, it provides a sense of collective identity, belonging and connection.

Furthermore, please do not forget: arts and culture are not just about creative expression—they are a **major economic driver** in Hawai'i. The **creative sector employs over 20,000 Hawai'i residents and generates \$3.3 billion annually**, fueling local businesses and economic growth.

If you want to encourage economic growth and help keep families of Hawai'i in Hawai'i, don't cut support that threatens jobs and shrink already limited educational resources for youth.

Let's keep supporting what makes living in Hawai'i truly vibrant: its people.

Oppose **HB1378-HD2-SD1**. Protect the Works of Art Special Fund.

Mahalo nui for your consideration and your service.

Sonia Nelson

Donor Relations Manager, Donkey Mill Art Center

HB-1378-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/1/2025 4:16:35 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Cynthia Smith	Testifying for Donkey Mill Art Center	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I'm writing to respectfully oppose HB1378-HD2-SD1. This bill introduces major concerns—especially the restriction of the Works of Art Special Fund and lack of clarity around governance and funding. Please protect the integrity of the SFCA and vote NO on HB1378-HD2-SD1.

HB-1378-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/1/2025 7:17:42 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Laurel Nakanishi	Testifying for Hawai'i Open Arts (HO?A) program	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dear Members of the Ways and Means Committee,

I am writing to respectfully urge you to **oppose HB1378-HD2-SD1**. This bill cuts dedicated funding used for arts education by 100%, and replaces it with less than half the current budgeted amount in general funds that are unstable year to year.

I work with a program called HŌ'Ā (Hawai'i Open Arts), which is funded by the Works of Art Special Fund. In this program, children in public and charter schools develop emotional well-being & a sense of place through immersive arts & mālama 'āina experiences. A key element of this program is the State Art in Public Places (APP) collection; students interpret, discuss, and reflect on an APP artwork as a means of connecting their learning at the mālama 'āina site with their lives.

Countless studies show the relationship between arts experiences and positive student outcomes. In my years in arts education, I have observed that the arts increase student academic success and engagement, build civic responsibility, develop real world skills like problem solving, critical thinking and empathy, and build self-confidence.

This bill would destroy funding for the HŌ'Ā program and other essential arts education programming in the state. In many schools, arts education programs funded by the Works of Art Special Fund are the only opportunities that students have to experience the arts. Cutting this dedicated arts funding will have long-lasting negative impacts on our keiki and our community. Please **oppose HB1378-HD2-SD1**.

Mahalo,
Laurel Nakanishi

Hawai'i Open Arts (HŌ'Ā) program director

HB-1378-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/2/2025 8:47:15 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Walter Kinoshita	Testifying for SafeHaus Wellness Services	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

The community in Hawaii need outlets like the arts to be able to express themselves. We are already living in stressful times and if you take away funding for these outlets the state of people's mental health will drastically decline. Cutting the funding to the arts does not create such an increase in financial gain for the state.

HB-1378-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/2/2025 8:45:14 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Brian Linares	Testifying for Exhibition Grid: A Contemporary Art Experience LLC	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

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

From: Brian Linares

Affiliation: Founder, Exhibition Grid: A Contemporary Art Experience, LLC

Subject: Strong Opposition to HB1378-HD2: Protecting Hawai'i's Cultural and Economic Assets

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

Aloha mai kākou,

I am Brian Linares, founder of Exhibition Grid: A Contemporary Art Experience, LLC, a Honolulu-based organization dedicated to fostering public engagement with the arts. We provide educational art walks, conduct art research, and offer gig work opportunities for emerging artists and art professionals. I am here to express my strong opposition to HB1378-HD2. This measure threatens the economic viability of our creative sector, the preservation of Hawai'i's cultural heritage, and the educational opportunities it provides.

Investing in the arts is not merely an expenditure; it is a strategic investment in our state's economic and cultural resilience. Maintaining stable funding for the arts is critical in times of fiscal uncertainty. It safeguards jobs, supports educational programs, and ensures the preservation of cultural assets that contribute significantly to our tourism industry and community well-being.

Key Points:

HB1378-HD2: A Detriment to Hawai'i's Creative Economy and Workforce Development:

This bill's proposed changes to the Works of Art Special Fund will directly impact the ability of organizations like Exhibition Grid to provide valuable gig work and training opportunities for emerging artists and art professionals.

The resulting reduction in funding will destabilize the creative sector, leading to job losses and hindering economic growth in an industry that contributes significantly to our state's revenue.

General Funds: An Unreliable Foundation for Sustainable Cultural and Educational Initiatives:

Relying solely on general fund appropriations creates an unstable environment for arts organizations and educational programs.

Arts funding is often the first to be cut during fiscal constraints, jeopardizing long-term planning and the continuity of vital cultural and educational initiatives.

Arts and Culture: Essential Components of Hawai'i's Economic, Educational, and Cultural Identity:

The arts are not a luxury; they are integral to our cultural identity, a driver of tourism, and a source of educational enrichment.

Investing in the arts enables us to preserve our unique cultural heritage, educate residents and visitors, and foster a vibrant and engaging community.

Exhibition Grid's operations rely on public art funding. Without it, we cannot provide the educational art walks, art research, and public access to art information that we have been providing.

I respectfully urge you to OPPOSE HB 1378-HD2 and to protect the Works of Art Special Fund. This fund is not simply a source of artistic expression but an investment in our state's economic stability, educational growth, and cultural preservation. Let us work together to ensure Hawai'i's arts and culture sector thrives, contributing to a prosperous and culturally rich future for all.

Mahalo for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Brian Linares,

Founder

Exhibition Grid: A Contemporary Art Experience, LLC

HB-1378-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/2/2025 8:34:51 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

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

Comments:

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

On behalf of Hawai'i Craftsmen and our members, I am submitting testimony in strong **OPPOSITION** to HB1378-HD2, which threatens the future of arts and culture funding in Hawai'i. The Works of Art Special Fund is the very foundation that sustains our creative and cultural communities. Given the current political environment, this is absolutely the wrong time to alter funding for this. The proposed general fund appropriation is temporary and comes with no guarantee of future support.

Hawai'i Craftsmen is a statewide 501(c)(3) organization with over 500 members across the state. 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.

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

Sincerely,
Christopher Edwards, Vice President, Hawai'i Craftsmen

HB-1378-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/2/2025 8:33:21 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Vicki Boswell	Testifying for Hokulani Children's Theatre of Molokai	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Opposition to HB1378 – Protect Arts and Culture Funding in Hawai‘i

Date: Thursday, April 3, at 10:00 AM

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

From: Vicki Boswell

Affiliation: President, Hokulani Children's Theatre of Molokai

Subject: Strong Opposition to HB1378

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

My name is Vicki Boswell, and I am writing to express my strong **OPPOSITION** to HB1378, which threatens critical funding for arts and culture in Hawai‘i. As a former Molokai social worker with over 20 years of experience as a mobile crisis counselor, elementary school counselor, and family therapist for families caught in the Child Protective Services system, I have seen firsthand the profound need for social-emotional development programs for our keiki. In response to this need, I founded Hokulani Children's Theatre of Molokai (Hokulani CTOM) 2.5 years ago to provide our island’s children with a space to learn vital skills that foster confidence, emotional resilience, and community engagement.

Key Points

The Arts Are a Lifeline for Vulnerable Populations

Hokulani CTOM is the **only** ongoing performing arts education program on Molokai, serving both **keiki and kūpuna**, two of the island’s most vulnerable populations. Research has consistently demonstrated the benefits of performing arts education for children, particularly those facing adversity. According to a report by the **National Endowment for the Arts**, students from low-income backgrounds who are highly involved in the arts are **five times more likely** to graduate high school and **twice as likely** to earn a bachelor’s degree compared to their peers with minimal arts exposure.

HB1378 Jeopardizes Long-Term Funding for the Arts

The Works of Art Special Fund is the only **dedicated and sustainable** source of public funding for arts and culture statewide. Restricting this fund will have **disastrous effects** on small communities like Molokai, where arts programs already struggle for resources. Without stable funding, programs like Hokulani CTOM will be unable to continue providing essential services that empower children and elders through artistic expression.

General Funds Are Not a Reliable Replacement

HB1378 proposes shifting funding to the general fund, but this is an unreliable alternative. General funds are subject to shifting priorities and economic downturns, often leaving arts programs underfunded or eliminated altogether. Given the financial constraints faced by small communities, **the loss of dedicated arts funding could mean the permanent closure of Molokai's only performing arts education program.**

Arts Education Builds Stronger, More Resilient Communities

Studies show that students engaged in the arts demonstrate improved cognitive skills, emotional intelligence, and academic performance. The **American Alliance for Theatre & Education** reports that students involved in drama programs have higher standardized test scores and stronger reading comprehension. Furthermore, arts participation has been linked to **lower rates of juvenile delinquency**, reinforcing the role of arts education in crime prevention and social well-being.

Conclusion

I urge you to **OPPOSE HB1378** and protect the Works of Art Special Fund, which has been essential in sustaining arts education and cultural preservation across Hawai'i. Eliminating dedicated funding for the arts would not only stifle creative expression but also diminish opportunities for our keiki and kūpuna to build confidence, resilience, and a sense of belonging.

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

Vicki Boswell

President, Hokulani Children's Theatre of Molokai

HB-1378-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/1/2025 1:07:27 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Debra McGee	Testifying for Kona Dance and Performing Arts	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Date: 4/1/25

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: Dance educator, director, choreographer and performer

Subject: Strong Opposition to HB1378-HD2 SD1

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

My name is Debra McGee , Director of two dance organizations, I teach through the HSFCA for Artists in the Schools, frequently choreograph productions and I perform whenever possible. 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. Dance has helped so many struggling youth to find purpose, focus, discipline and freedom.

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.

Mahalo,

Debra McGee



Hawai'i Forest Industry Association
7192 Kalaniana'ole Hwy
Suite A-143A, #249
Honolulu, HI 96825
Phone: 808/933/9411
Email: hfia@hawaiiiforest.org

LATE

Date: 04/02/25

TO: WAM Chair Dela Cruz and WAM Committee Members

FROM: Hawai'i Forest Industry Association (HFIA)

SUBJECT: Comments on HB1378 HD2 SD1 Relating to the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts

Dear Chair Dela Cruz and WAM 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 focussed on the forest industry, we also care deeply about the well-being of the arts community and the funding it receives and we oppose HB1378 HD2 SD1, which threatens the future of arts and culture funding in Hawai'i.

HB1378 HD2 SD1 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.

Furthermore, 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.

Finally, 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.

On behalf of the Directors and members of the Hawai'i Forest Industry Association, please oppose HB1378 HD2 SD1 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,

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-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/1/2025 10:50:35 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
lynne matusow	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

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.” Passing this bill is reckless, given all the federal grants which are being rescinded.

Please defer this bill.

Dear Senator

As an arts administrator, teacher, and volunteer for over 35 years, I am writing to urge you not to hear HB1378-HD2-SD1, or if it is heard, please oppose it.

This bill cuts dedicated funding used for arts education by 100%, and replaces it with less than half the current budgeted amount in general funds.

If there is anything that schools want and need today it is positive, creative, collaborative learning brought to them by trained teaching artists. Years of research validate the arts as a vital part of every child's education, not just those that attend elite private schools. The Artists in the Schools program provides direct standards based arts lessons to 130 public schools annually. You have seen their work and heard their voices. Please do not cut the Works of Art Special Fund.

In addition to the Artists in the Schools (AIS) programs, the Works of Art Special Fund supports training both classroom teachers and artists to become teachers. The cost for all of these programs is value added; there is no waste of funds, no politics involved. Countless volunteers review the AIS grants from schools to be sure they are following the high standards set by the SFCA and ARTS FIRST Partners of Hawai'i. There is no better place to put our tax dollars.

Please do not allow this bill to be passed.

Mahalo,
Susan Browne
Maui resident
Commissioner, State Foundation on Culture and the Arts

HB-1378-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/1/2025 11:08:13 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Lindsey Ilagan	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

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. This is the only dedicated and sustainable source of public funding for arts and culture statewide. The bill jeopardizes long-term investments in public art, artist grants, and cultural programs, placing SFCA's core work at the mercy of unpredictable funding cycles and ultimately threatening the future of arts and culture funding in Hawai'i.

HB-1378-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/1/2025 11:29:02 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Peter Powlison	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

The addendums and edits added to an otherwise arts-friendly bill cut one of the most important dedicated arts funding sources in the state. 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 personally worked 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 assist so many different artists and arts organizations in so many different ways as the Hawai'i SFCA. This organization should be (and rightfully IS) a point of civic pride, and these persistent bills, 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-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/1/2025 11:33:07 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Keri Powlison	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Senators,

I am writing in vehement opposition to HB1378-HD2. I have worked in the architecture & construction industry in the State of Hawai'i for 12 years and in that time have lived in Kailua and Kaneohe. The culture and community found here is second to none and we need to continue to celebrate and support it, both for the hearts & souls of our locals and to create connections with our visitors. We all know that everything is extremely expensive these days (cost of eggs, tariffs, inflation, etc) and that this state runs on our tourists' dollars. Please ask yourselves: why would tourists spend the extra money and time flying to Hawaii when they can find beautiful beaches in the cheaper and easier-to-reach states of Florida and California? It's our culture, our island community, and the beauty of the stories told through Hawai'i's songs, dance, and art. What makes Hawaii so special, so magical and such a dream destination is not just the land, but the people and the culture. Defunding our arts will send our artists packing for the mainland because they no longer have any income here, it will strip the heart and soul away from the daily lives of our locals, and it will remove the most impactful and important aspect of that dream Hawaiian vacation. Imagine growing up in the Midwest, never having seen the ocean before, and landing in an airport without any art, a soulless, antiseptic space that could be anywhere on the planet. Imagine driving along King Street without our public sculptures? Imagine your own offices without the local artwork: how would you feel inviting your constituents into your office with bare walls or covered in generic "dentist office" style art? Art tells the story of our past, of who we are, and what we value. It communicates at a deep and meaningful level. This bill puts the future of Hawaii's arts in jeopardy.

I strongly oppose this bill and hope you will, too.

HB-1378-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/1/2025 11:50:31 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Teig Grennan	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am urging legislators to oppose this bill. Hawaii's public love the arts and native practioners enjoy the support to continue their practices with the little funding the SFCA receives. This is a small budget and does not need to be attacked in order to make a real difference. Protect dedicated funding sources for the SFCA, or explore other options by working with the agency. Lining out the 1% for the arts is not a solution and the justifications for trying to do this year after year always change because they are false to begin with. Hawaii was the pioneer of the One Percent for the Arts legislation.

Thank you,

Teig Grennan

HB-1378-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/1/2025 11:51:26 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Michael Zimmel	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Hawaii was the first state to have a dedicated arts fund. It's helped us in too many ways to count. In these scary times we need art more than ever. If this bill gets passed the funding will get cut. Everyone knows that. That will hurt us all. Strongly oppose

HB-1378-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/1/2025 12:05:30 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Randy Wong	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am writing to OPPOSE HB1378 HD2 SD1, as it threatens the autonomy of the creative economy, has negative impacts for artists and arts organizations, and is riding on the coat-tails of an already-difficult funding landscape for the arts, music, and charitable organizations on the whole. The State of Hawaii *must* maintain, at a minimum, the dedicated 1% funding to the arts. Doing anything less will be a disservice to our keiki, who will live with the consequences of less art.

HB-1378-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/1/2025 12:32:54 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kamakani Konia	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha

My name is Kamakani Konia and I am submitting written testimony to state my **opposition** to HB1378-HD2-SD1.

The State Foundation on Culture and the Arts (SFCA) is vital to the well-being of Hawaii's contemporary art scene and cultural sector. The SFCA not only makes the arts and humanities accessible to all of our island communities, but provides a global platform that shares critical aspects of Native Hawaiian culture and history with visitors from around the world. What's amazing about the SFCA is that Its breadth of programming extends far beyond amassing a collection of the finest examples of artwork created by our local artists. For example, its artists in the schools programming provides art education opportunities for schools struggling to provide creative outlets for their students and its apprentice mentoring grants ensures that traditional cultural practices are perpetuated for generations to come. The State of Hawaii and our lawmakers must protect these assets instead of placing them at the mercy of the distribution of general funds which are not guaranteed.

By abolishing the SFCA's special funding, you are severing a lifeline that guarantees vital programming, jobs, and opportunities for local citizens, families, students, and a global audience that desperately needs the lessons of a Hawaii that can only be shared through authentic experiences. Despite the alarming rise of imperialistic sentiments, xenophobia, and hatred, the arts continue to provide a shelter and safe-space for our most vulnerable neighbors and family members. We must, at any cost, continue to provide the services necessary for free expression and acceptance.

We will not settle for anything less.

Mahalo for your time,

Kamakani Konia

HB-1378-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/1/2025 12:38:40 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Joshua Tengan	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Protect Hawai‘i’s Public Art and Cultural Legacy – Oppose HB 1378-HD2

I write in **strong opposition to HB 1378-HD2.**

This bill is Kyle Yamashita's HB1807 from 2024, widely rejected by Hawai‘i's Arts Community, repackaged and buried in a bill to support the performing arts.

While I fully support increased funding for the Performing Arts, this bill is a wolf in sheep’s clothing — it appears to appropriate funds to performance programs while completely gutting the SFCA’s budget by eliminating the Works of Art Special Fund, a critical and stable source of support for public art, artist grants, and cultural programming across Hawai‘i.

This is NOT a real investment in the arts — **it’s a misleading and sneaky maneuver** that threatens the very foundation of how we fund and sustain our cultural life in this state. By removing dedicated funding, this bill places SFCA’s core work at the mercy of **unpredictable funding cycles and the whims of legislators who use the arts as a political bargaining chip.**

I urge Senate WAM committee members to:

- **Reject HB 1378-HD2** and preserve the Works of Art Special Fund.
- **Recognize this bill for what it truly is** — a dismantling of one of the only stable arts funding sources in the state.
- **Protect the integrity of our cultural investments** and not sacrifice one part of the arts ecosystem to support another.

Public art isn’t a luxury — it’s a public good. It connects communities, preserves culture, and inspires future generations. The Works of Art Special Fund has supported countless artists and made art accessible in everyday places throughout Hawai‘i. Its elimination would be a major step backward.

I urge you to vote NO on HB 1378-HD2.

HB-1378-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/1/2025 12:38:44 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

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 oppose HB1378-HD2 but support the arts. The arts bring people together to celebrate positive achievements, swap cultural influence and push traditional practices into the future.

I know because I have worked at Hui No’eau on Maui, operated my own gallery in Chinatown and helped run The ARTS at Marks Garage for 15 years. I co-founded First Friday and Chinatown Artists Lofts and 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.

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, because it threatens the future of arts and culture funding in Hawai’i.

HB-1378-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/1/2025 1:09:30 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jay West	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

I appreciate the opportunity to submit testimony on this bill that addresses funding for Culture and the Arts in the State of Hawaii.

I'm a 40 year resident of the Big Island.

I'm writing to respectfully oppose HB1378-HD2-SD1. This bill introduces major concerns—especially the restriction of the Works of Art Special Fund and lack of clarity around governance and funding for a performing arts special fund.

Please protect the integrity of the State Foundation for Culture and the Arts and vote NO on HB1378-HD2-SD1.

Mahalo,

Jay West

HB-1378-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/1/2025 1:17:28 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Ladini Conder	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I'm writing to respectfully oppose HB1378-HD2-SD1. This bill introduces major concerns—especially the restriction of the Works of Art Special Fund and lack of clarity around governance and funding. Please protect the integrity of the SFCA and vote NO on HB1378-HD2-SD1.

HB-1378-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/1/2025 1:23:39 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Alexandra Obra	Testifying for Waiahole Elementary School	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I'm writing to respectfully oppose HB1378-HD2-SD1. This bill introduces major concerns—especially the restriction of the Works of Art Special Fund and lack of clarity around governance and funding. Please protect the integrity of the SFCA and vote NO on HB1378-HD2-SD1.

HB-1378-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/1/2025 1:40:06 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Peter U Hansen JR	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I'm writing to oppose HB1378-HD2-SD1 respectfully. This bill introduces major concerns—especially the restriction of the Works of Art Special Fund and the lack of clarity around governance and funding. Please protect the integrity of the SFCA and vote NO on HB1378-HD2-SD1.

HB-1378-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/1/2025 1:54:51 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
susan harrington	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

“I’m writing to respectfully oppose HB1378-HD2-SD1. This bill introduces major concerns—especially the restriction of the Works of Art Special Fund and lack of clarity around governance and funding. Please protect the integrity of the SFCA and vote NO on HB1378-HD2-SD1.”

Together, let’s ensure Hawai’i continues to uplift artists, honor cultural practitioners, and invest in a thriving creative future for all.

Mahalo!
Susan Harrington

Radford High School

HOnolulu, HI 96818

HB-1378-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/1/2025 2:11:05 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kristen Jordan	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I'm writing to respectfully oppose HB1378-HD2-SD1. This bill introduces major concerns—especially the restriction of the Works of Art Special Fund and lack of clarity around governance and funding. Specifically, here are some of my concerns:

- Limits on WOASF could eliminate essential staff support for public art programs.
- The bill creates a new special fund for performing arts—but offers **no clear plan for how it will be managed or funded.**
- The proposed changes are **unclear, underdeveloped, and potentially harmful** to Hawaii's creative sector.

Please protect the integrity of the SFCA and vote NO on HB1378-HD2-SD1.

Thank you,

Kristen Jordan

HB-1378-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/1/2025 2:15:46 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Elizabeth Baxter	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I'm writing to strongly oppose HB1378-HD2-SD1. This bill introduces major concerns—especially the restrictions and changes to the Works of Art Special Fund. The bill is also very troubling with the moving of funding from special funds to general funds, putting the museum, the APP collection, and SFCA staff at risk. This is a very risky and uncertain time at the Federal level, and it makes absolutely no sense to be putting the SFCA's funding, and the arts and culture in Hawaii, on the chopping block at this time. Please protect the integrity of the SFCA and vote **NO** on HB1378-HD2-SD1.

HB-1378-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/1/2025 2:21:43 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Aes Ferrer	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Regardless of age, sex, and orientation, individuals deserve the right to feel safe and access to services.

HB-1378-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/1/2025 2:25:21 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Usaki Michael	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha all,

I am writing to show my support on HB1378.

I believe that performance art is a very healthy way for people (especially those who have been disenfranchised), to express themselves and connect with others. These programs not only provide a safe space for people to express but it also holds the power to inspire the people who get to experience them.

Mahalo for your time & energy!

HB-1378-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/1/2025 2:28:48 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Bernard Uy	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

As a citizen, a parent, a business owner of a creative agency, and as a volunteer board member of an arts organization, I'm writing to respectfully oppose HB1378-HD2-SD1. This bill introduces major concerns—especially the restriction of the Works of Art Special Fund and lack of clarity around governance and funding.

Please protect the integrity of the SFCA and vote NO on HB1378-HD2-SD1.

Sincerely,

-Bernard Uy
Wall-to-Wall Studios, Honolulu, HI

HB-1378-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/1/2025 2:29:06 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Lila Lee	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Date: 4/1/25

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: Artist

Subject: Strong Opposition to HB1378-HD2 SD1

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

My name is Lila Lee. I'm a Honolulu resident. I'm an artist and someone who works within the arts in Hawaii. 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.

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. The arts are needed in times like this. PLEASE.

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

Sincerely,

Lila Lee

HB-1378-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/1/2025 2:32:56 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Lasensua Osborne	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

To whom it may concern

I urge you to protect funding for arts education in our schools. The arts play a vital role in student development, fostering creativity, critical thinking, and problem-solving skills. Research consistently shows that arts education improves academic performance, boosts student engagement, and enhances emotional well-being.

For many students, school is their only access to arts programs, which provide essential opportunities for self-expression and cultural appreciation, particularly in a state as rich in heritage as Hawaii. Cutting funding would deprive students of these benefits and limit their potential.

Please DO NOT pass this bill, so that we can continue to support arts education and ensure that all students have access to these invaluable learning experiences.

Sincerely,

Lasensua Osborne

HB-1378-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/1/2025 2:36:50 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

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

Comments:

I strongly urge you to oppose bill 1378. This bill slashes the possibility for emerging artists to make a living in Hawai'i, thus needing to resort either to not fulfilling their goals of being an artist, or leaving Hawai'i in order to make a living.

In addition, this bill jeopardizes arts education. If passed, it will reduce the arts education funds by 50% at best. By doing so, thousands of keiki will not receive arts education residencies, which are often the only time they experience the arts in the school year. This bill will also severely negatively affect countless teaching artists- whose whole livelihoods are teaching arts (dance, drama, music, poetry, visual arts) through arts residencies at schools and for communities.

In addition, this arts funding has been able to provide immersive arts experiences for neurodivergent/severely disabled young people over the past three years. Special education teachers throughout O'ahu have shared how impactful this has been, and how they incorporate their experiences into their teachings. The special funds fully funds this program, and it would ideally spread to all the islands, not just O'ahu. By cutting arts funding, this type of programming for our most vulnerable community would disappear.

In times of uncertainty with legislation nationally, it is vital that arts funding remain secure (without secured arts funding, it often becomes the first thing cut). Please be on the right side of history, and oppose bill 1378.

HB-1378-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/1/2025 2:37:56 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Nicole Duarte	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

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

Aloha! It's Nicole Duarte; I've written to you before and I'm writing to you yet again in **strong opposition to HB1378-HD2**.

Today, I write to you from the Davies Pacific Center, where I am sitting as an exhibition attendant for Hawai'i Triennial 2025 (HT25), the state's largest exhibition of contemporary art from here, the Pacific, and beyond. (The International Biennial Association recently called HT25 one of the most significant in the region.) Here, I greet visitors and talk to them about the exhibition, while I work on the catalog for the Triennial, field media requests, make updates to our website, and submit online testimony to the State legislature. Like so many people in Hawai'i, we, in the arts, wear many hats—and some of us work multiple jobs and take on freelance work to make ends meet. Our world has always been a bit of a tenuous mix of shifting sands—made even more precarious by the current presidential administration—but one thing we could count on in Hawai'i was the Works of Art Special Fund. This fund, as you know, supports more than just works of art, it supports exhibition making, arts-related programming, and the people who look to the arts for enrichment and well-being.

I should probably tell you that HB1378-HD2 jeopardizes the long-term funding and stability that the Works of Art Special Fund provides, undermining the critical funding on which organizations and artists operate and fundraise, as I'm sure you're aware. But my mind can't help but think about all of the visitors to the Triennial, the participants in the Triennial's public programming, and the students who have made field trips to the exhibition with their classes. For students who are immersed in STEM curriculum, the exhibition—and the visual arts in general—offers a different mode of visual-based learning, an opportunity to absorb teachings outside of a classroom setting, a chance to gain visual literacy, and practice critical thinking skills. For many students, art is an introduction to a new culture, its traditions, and peoples. For tourists, the Triennial offers a more nuanced and layered view of Hawai'i and the Pacific. For locals, the Triennial creates much-needed dialogues with other artists beyond our shores, while fostering community within our archipelago.

All of this is to say that HB1378-HD2 would destabilize a lot of good things in the community, when they have never been needed more. Please vote against this bill.

Mahalo nui,
Nicole

HB-1378-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/1/2025 2:44:29 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Gig Greenwood	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

My name is Gig Greenwood I am 76 years old and have been a Hawaiian citizen for most of my life and am a lifelong Artist!

I am a member and past president of the Hawai'i Watercolor Society (Stevenson Middle and Roosevelt High PTA president, etc) and an organizer of the Artists to appose previous attempts of the legislature to make life harder for artists of all kinds by taking away those items that help all aspects of the Arts in Hawai'i!!!

Before you take any further action on these proposals, consider the following:

Without artists what would **YOUR LIFE BE LIKE?**

NO: music, movies, TV, plays, decorations of any kind (all clothing would be gray, as would just about everything in that world!) cars, toys, planes, housing (it took creative imagination to make a house).

As a matter of fact **THERE IS ALMOST NOTHING IN YOUR LIFE THAT IS NOT TOUCHED BY AN ARTIST!!!!!!** Perhaps the only way to get away from things that are the work of an artist is to become a monk living in a cave or the desert **WITH NOTHING ELSE!!!!!!**

Look around you, any where you want to choose, and not find that **YOUR ENTIRE WORLD AND ALMOST EVERYTHING YOU ENJOY AND BRINGS YOU PLEASURE** is because **AN ARTIST WAS INVOLVED!!!!!!** Think about it!!

If you still believe in supporting this Bill, please eliminate all those things in your life that has already been created by Artists!!!!!! **TAKE ALL THE PICTURES OFF YOUR WALLS! NO MUSIC,NO DANCING, NOTHING, NO TV, NO DECORATIONS ON ANYTHING, NO..... NONO.....**

For the sake of everyone who enjoys and is enriched by the Arts, Please kill Bill HB1378 HD2 SD1 immediately!!!!

Aloha,

Gig Greenwood

HB-1378-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/1/2025 2:49:56 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Alisha Horikami	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Oppose Welcome to Gboard clipboard, any text you copy will be saved here.HB1378 HD2 – Protect Arts and Culture Funding in Hawai‘i

Date: April 1, 2025

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

From: Alisha Horikami

Affiliation: Stevenson Middle School Curriculum Coordinator

Subject: Strong Opposition to HB1378-HD2 SD1

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

My name is Alisha Horikami. I'm a curriculum coordinator at Stevenson Middle School and our school is a recipient of the Artists in the Schools grant which is largely funded by the state's Public Art Funding. Through arts integration, our English Learners (EL) at Stevenson have the opportunity to share their cultures/traditions, build confidence by being teachers or docents, and reconnect with their roots. Our EL parents and families have appreciated the opportunities and are proud of their achievements. 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,

Alisha Horikami

(808)351-8030

HB-1378-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/1/2025 2:54:17 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Maddalynn Seseapasara	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

I'm writing to respectfully oppose HB1378-HD2-SD1. This bill introduces major concerns—especially the restriction of the Works of Art Special Fund and lack of clarity around governance and funding. Please protect the integrity of the SFCA and vote NO on HB1378-HD2-SD1.

Mahalo,

Maddalynn Seseapasara

HB-1378-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/1/2025 3:29:37 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

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

Comments:

Aloha mai leaders of our beloved Hawai'i,

As a Kanaka 'Oiwī curator and arts advocate who has witnessed the power of the arts to heal and uplift our communities, I'm writing to respectfully oppose HB1378-HD2-SD1. This bill introduces major concerns—especially the restriction of the Works of Art Special Fund and lack of clarity around governance and funding. Please protect the integrity of the SFCA and vote NO on HB1378-HD2-SD1.

There are numerous concerns I have about this bill as it could eliminate essential staff support for public art programs. The bill creates a new special fund for performing arts—but offers no clear plan for how it will be managed or funded and the proposed changes are unclear, underdeveloped, and potentially harmful to Hawaii's creative sector.

I support expanding the SFCA's focus to include the performing arts—but not at the expense of its existing programs or financial integrity.

Me ka ha'aha'a,

Mina Elison, Ke'ei, Kona Hema, Hawai'i

HB-1378-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/1/2025 3:30:08 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Avery Holshouser	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I'm writing to respectfully oppose HB1378-HD2-SD1. This bill introduces major concerns—especially the restriction of the Works of Art Special Fund and lack of clarity around governance and funding. Please protect the integrity of the SFCA and vote NO on HB1378-HD2-SD1. Art is so important. Art is Healing!!

HB-1378-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/1/2025 3:33:28 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Solomon Enos	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Testimony IN OPPOSITION to HB1378 HD2 SD1

Thursday, April 3rd 2025 at 10am. Conference Room 211 at the Hawai'i State Capitol, 415 South Beretania Street.

I am testifying IN OPPOSITION to House Bill 1378 HD2 SD1.

To the Senate Committee on Ways and Means. Chair Senator Donovan Dela Cruz and Vice Chair Senator Sharon Moriwaki.

My name is Solomon Robert Nui Enos, Artist in Residence at the Capitol Modern. I strongly urge the Committee on Ways and Means to stop this bill, which if passed, will restrict access to public art and art programs run by the State. The loss of these opportunities will have manifold short and long term negative impacts across the State. Art is the quintessential proactivity. For before you have a building, you must have a drawing first. To imagine our way out of major challenges we face locally and globally, we need to harness the power of creativity, not endanger it.

With humility,

Me ke aloha,

Solomon Enos

HB-1378-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/1/2025 3:42:58 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

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

Comments:

Aloha!

My name is Yvonne Manipon. I'm a Honolulu resident. I'm an artist and provide my artwork to Cedar Street Gallery 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.

2. 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.

3. 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.

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,

Yvonne D. Manipon

HB-1378-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/1/2025 3:44:24 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Aaron Ruddick	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly oppose HB1378 HD2 SD1.

HB-1378-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/1/2025 3:45:55 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

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

Comments:

I strongly oppose cutting funding for the arts

HB-1378-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/1/2025 3:47:04 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jodie Chock	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am writing to respectfully but firmly oppose HB1378 HD2 SD1. I am a public school visual arts educator, so we are heavily reliant on programs and events organized by the SFCA for our learning in the schools to be valuable for our students. The arts are struggling to thrive in schools even though students benefit tremendously from having them, especially for their emotional wellbeing. We cannot afford to have proposed changes that are potentially harmful to our programs and the students that we service. Please stop compromising our funding and programs.

HB-1378-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/1/2025 3:47:34 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Tasman Kekai Mattox	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-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/1/2025 3:49:36 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jaren Chun	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I'm writing to respectfully oppose HB1378-HD2-SD1. This bill introduces major concerns- especially the restriction of the works of art special fund and lack of clarity around governance and funding. Please protect the integrity of the SCFA and vote "no" on HB1378-HD2-SD1.

HB-1378-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/1/2025 3:57:10 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Diane Smith	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

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

My name is Diane Powlison Smith. I'm a Kailua resident. 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 as a whole and to countless individuals within the community. It provides a venue for artists to show and sell their work, and it offers opportunities for everyone to learn to appreciate the arts and to express themselves through a range of mediums. It perpetuates Hawaii's traditional techniques in woodwork, fiber weaving, and incorporating island materials to create something beautiful.

Please keep in mind:

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 strongly 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, Diane Smith

HB-1378-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/1/2025 4:08:42 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Nalani Sato	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

The caves at Lascaux, France are the earliest clues we have into the daily life of humans 20,000 years ago. The art and artifacts left in the pyramids of the Aztecs, Egyptians are a window into life up to 8,000 years ago; The art and sculpture of the Greek, Romans etc. It is thanks to those in power during those times delegated funding to preserving the stories associated with their ways of life.

To cut funding to the Arts, means cutting future generations from knowing where they came from. How are they supposed to know where they are going if they don't know where they are from? How are they to know how to navigate their present if they have no stars to anchor them?

I strongly oppose HB1378 HD2 and ask for your consideration is opposing it as well. Thank you. Nalani Sato

HB-1378-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/1/2025 4:24:57 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Wendy Romanchak	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

I'm writing to respectfully oppose HB1378-HD2-SD1. This bill introduces major concerns—especially the restriction of the Works of Art Special Fund and lack of clarity around governance and funding. Please protect the integrity of the SFCA and vote NO on HB1378-HD2-SD1.

Mahalo,

Wendy Romanchak

HB-1378-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/1/2025 4:25:11 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

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

Comments:

I'm writing to respectfully oppose HB1378-HD2-SD1. This bill introduces major concerns- especially the restriction of the works of art special fund and lack of clarity around governance and funding. Please protect the integrity of the SCFA and vote "no" on HB1378-HD2-SD1.

HB-1378-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/1/2025 4:36:17 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Melissa Chimera	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dear Senator Donovan M. Dela Cruz, Senator Sharon Y. Moriwaki, Vice Chair, members of the Ways and Means Committee.

As a working studio artist, land care manager with the University of Hawaii at Mānoa and Hawaii Triennial 2025 artist I'm writing to respectfully oppose HB1378-HD2-SD1. This bill introduces major concerns—especially the restriction of the Works of Art Special Fund and lack of clarity around governance and funding. The bill creates a new special fund for performing arts—but offers no clear plan for how it will be managed or funded. The proposed changes are unclear, underdeveloped, and potentially harmful to Hawaii's creative sector.

The Special Art Fund has supported me in the creation of works of art highlighting our endangered Hawaiian birds such as the Palila here on Hawai'i Island--works of art which hang in the state capitol and in countless other public locations. Without the financial support that the fund provides, I could have never created artworks that serve to educate Hawaii's people and enrich lives by bringing awareness about our vanishing forests and species.

Please protect the dedicated source of funding that is essential for artists like myself to not only thrive but perform a valuable service for our communities.

With gratitude and aloha,

Melissa Chimera

HB-1378-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/1/2025 4:39:04 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

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

,Aloha Chair, Vice Chair, 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 Hawaii 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 Hawaii'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 Hawaii'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-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/1/2025 4:41:08 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Bonnie Kim	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

April 1, 2025

Opposing the Bill HB1378-HD2-SD1

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-SD1 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 HB1378-HD2-SD1 because it will have detrimental effects not only in public art 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-SD1 and hope the state legislature will find ways to support more for education and arts. Please protect the integrity of the SFCA and vote NO on HB1378-HD2-SD1.

Sincerely,

Bonnie Kim

HB-1378-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/1/2025 5:13:53 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

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

Comments:

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

My name is Celia Cheng. I'm a Honolulu resident and a letterpress artist. 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.

Here are the main reasons to oppose this bill:

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.

Please, please show your commitment to supporting Hawaii's arts and culture sector.

Mahalo,
Celia Cheng

HB-1378-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/1/2025 6:28:22 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Linda L Jenks	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

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

My name is Dr. Linda Jenks. I'm a Kailua resident. 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,

Linda Jenks, M.D.

748 Pahumele Place

Kailua, HI 96734

HB-1378-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/1/2025 6:48:09 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Bianca Isaki	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Senators - please oppose HB1378. It will end the lifeline for Public Art in Hawai'i at such a critical time.

Yours,

Bianca Isaki

HB-1378-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/2/2025 8:50:37 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Chrissy Chavez	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,

Aloha mai kākou-

I write this testimony in strong **OPPOSITION** to HB1378-HD2, which threatens the future of arts and culture funding in Hawai‘i.

Investment in the arts is a sign of a strong economy and thriving society. In this time of federal cuts and uncertainty, it is essential to keep funding for the arts alive. This is needed to protect the future of arts programs and protect culture and the arts for our keiki and society in general. By showing that we value and respect culture and the arts, we support the well-being of our community and its artists and practitioners.

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

OPPOSE HB1378-HD2 and 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,
Chrissy Chavez

HB-1378-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/1/2025 7:06:22 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jody Arthur	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Date: April 1, 2025

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

From: Jody Arthur

Affiliation: Library Assistant and artist

Subject: Strong Opposition to HB1378-HD2 SD1

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

My name is Jody Arthur. I'm a Maui resident who works in the Public Library System. As an artist, I've participated in several local arts programs and had my work purchased by the Works of Art Special Fund. The loss of that program would be a loss to the islands. As someone who works with children in the library system, you would be depriving our keiki of access to art programs that encourage them to flourish and thrive.

I **strongly oppose 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,

Jody Arthur

HB-1378-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/1/2025 6:55:43 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jarett Lapitan	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

While I appreciate the intent of HB1378 to support the performing arts in Hawaii, I am concerned about the establishment of the Performing Arts Grants Program and the associated Performing Arts Grants Special Fund. The bill's provisions for funding performing arts events through these mechanisms may divert essential resources from other critical areas within the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts. Additionally, the bill's effective date of July 1, 2025, raises questions about its immediate applicability and implementation. I urge lawmakers to reconsider the allocation of funds and ensure that any new initiatives do not compromise existing programs that are vital to preserving and promoting Hawaii's diverse cultural heritage.

HB-1378-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/1/2025 7:02:30 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kathleen Hoppe	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Date: April 1, 2025

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

From: Kathleen Hoppe

Affiliation: Community member, public school educator, parent

Subject: Strong Opposition to HB1378-HD2 SD1

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

My name is Kathleen Hoppe and I am writing to you overlooking the beautiful Makaha Valley in Wai‘anae, where I am a community member, parent, and a public school educator. In all roles I embody, I see the importance of the arts in our community. The future of arts and culture funding is crucial to us all in Hawai‘i, particularly our keiki. Our arts promote social/emotional learning, empathy, critical thinking, belonging, and connection. I have seen how excited keiki get when they get to experience hands-on arts instruction, get to go on field trips around the arts, and when they get to participate in arts integration strategies during core instruction. Eyes and smiles get big, and engagement grows.

It is my understanding that general funds are not enough, as they are not reliable due to being temporary, when what keiki need is dedicated, stable funding for sustainability of the arts. We need the arts in our community, and so the Works of Art Special Fund in particular needs to be funded for the long term.

I strongly urge you all to oppose HB1378-HD2 so that we can ensure protection of the Works of Art Special Fund and its longevity. Your kind consideration is appreciated.

Mahalo,

Kathleen Hoppe

HB-1378-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/1/2025 6:28:03 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Hokupaa Melim	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I'm writing to respectfully oppose HB 1378-HD2-SD1. This bill introduces major concerns, especially the restriction of the works of Art Special and the lack of clarity around governance and funding. Art is crucial and critical to working professionals lives as well as kids. I strongly oppose this bill.

HB-1378-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/1/2025 7:16:44 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jacquelyn Perreira	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I'M WRITING TO RESPECTFULLY OPPOSE HB1378-HD2-SD1. THIS BILL INTRODUCES MAJOR CONCERNS-- ESPECIALLY THE RESTRICTION OF THE WORKS OF ART SPECIAL FUND AND LACK OF CLARITY AROUND GOVERNANCE AND FUNDING. PLEASE PROTECT THE INTEGRITY OF THE SFCA AND VOTE NO ON HB1378-HD2-SD1.

HB-1378-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/1/2025 7:25:55 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Alexandra Skees	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am writing to respectfully oppose HB1378-HD2-SD1. The fact that this bill passed with only one fully affirmative vote previously, and with written opposition from the Governor himself, should raise serious alarm bells for the WAM committee. This bill introduces major concerns - especially the restriction of the Works of Art Special Fund, and the lack of clarity around governance and funding. This fund has operated successfully in this capacity for decades and has provided innumerable opportunities for the arts community (and many more) across the State. Please protect the integrity of the SFCA and vote **NO** on HB1378-HD2-SD1.

Thank you.

HB-1378-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/1/2025 7:30:51 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kristi Auyong	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

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

My name is Kristi Auyong and I am a long time art educator and artist. I have been teaching art the past seven years in Hawaii and watched many of my students, friends and colleagues thrive in the art industry. 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 young artists to grow in their craft while expressing and sharing the multitude of cultures that make Hawaii unique.

At the school I work at, art is essential to their development and craft as this hosts many community resources and activities for all of Hawaii. Art is essential to a person's social emotional well-being and taking away this will only hurt our community members. Furthermore the artist in schools grant, allows students to get exposure to multiple artists and art techniques that most normal DOE schools wouldn't be able to afford

Key Points

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.

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.

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.

HB-1378-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/1/2025 8:47:08 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Brooke Jones	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Morikawa, and members of the Ways & Means Committee,

I write in strong opposition to HB1378 HD2 SD1. The funding change this bill seeks to implement would be detrimental at any time - and it is even more detrimental at this time, when we are experiencing destruction of federal funding for so many necessary services.

Culture and the arts is necessary and requires a dedicated, sustainable source of state funding.

Support for the arts is more than support for a nice-to-have: the arts is part of the foundation of our ability to practice our first amendment rights to free speech as it is a crucial way in which we share our voices, stories, and ideas and listen to the voices, stories, and ideas of others. Arts programs support our ability to nurture and educate future generations.

Please oppose HB1378 HD2 SD1.

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Brooke Jones

HB-1378-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/1/2025 7:27:22 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

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

Comments:

Aloha,

I am writing to urge you to oppose bill HB1378-HD2-SD1.

This bill cuts dedicated funding used for arts education by 100%, and replaces it with less than half the current budgeted amount in general funds which are unstable year to year. Our keiki deserve more than this. By cutting these funds we are doing a disservice to them and our community.

Please do not allow this bill to be passed.

Mahalo,
Jenny Wallace
Canon, Episcopal Church of Hawai‘i

HB-1378-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/1/2025 7:37:46 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

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

Comments:

This bill is a problem, not a solution. It is deceiving and poses a long term threat to all of the arts and traditional crafts throughout the islands. While it looks enticing and appears to help secure funding for performing arts, the core of this bill will devastate the arts sector in the coming years as it removes the secured funding source that was promised generations ago. The original source of funding should not be adjusted here. This would drastically change the landscape of arts, arts education and cultural activities in the islands. These designated funds have positively impacted kamaaina, and provided a soul that the arts have lived through over the decades. The amount of money that would be taken from the arts by passing this, is not enough to solve the housing crisis, it will not fix the rail disaster, and it should not be used to market the islands to tourists, or pay for their sunscreen or to bury the plastic they leave behind. Those issues need a solution that demands change, and won't be solved by depleting all other funding for things that bring joy, knowledge, and cultural connections to everyone living in the islands. Please don't annihilate the arts by pushing this one through. Think about the consequences. I am urging you to practice democracy & listen to what citizens want. We want dedicated, secured funding for the arts in perpetuity.

1 April 2025

To: **Senate Committee on Ways and Means**

Chair, Donovan Dela Cruz

Vice Chair, Sharon Moriwaki

Committee Members

Senator Henry Aquino, Senator Lynn DeCoite, Senator Brandon Elefante, Senator Troy Hashimoto, Senator Lorraine Inouye, Senator Dru Mamo Kanuha, Senator Michelle Kidani, Senator Donna Mercado Kim, Senator Chris Lee, Senator Glenn Wakai, Senator Kurt Fevella

From: Janet Sato, retired art educator

RE: STRONGLY OPPOSED to HB1378-HD2-SD1

Dear Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Moriwaki, and WAM Committee Members,

I am a lifelong resident of Maui County who appreciates your dedicated leadership and sincerely thank you for your service to the State of Hawai'i. I am writing to voice my strong opposition to **HB 1378-HD2-SD1** 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. 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, April 3rd.

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 former visual arts students have been the grateful beneficiaries of the SFCA's varied programs over many years and are currently working professionals in a wide variety of careers in our state, our nation, and abroad. I have personally witnessed how the multi-faceted experiences provided through these formative opportunities to meet and work with professional artists, musicians, storytellers, writers, thespians, cultural practitioners, and non-profit arts organizations extended learning far beyond the walls of the classroom and deep into their souls, creating long term positive, inspirational effects. 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 - set into motion by Pundy Yokouchi's incredible vision and previously wholeheartedly supported by our lawmakers - through this dangerously amended bill.

Thank you for your time and consideration in this matter.

HB-1378-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/1/2025 5:31:19 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Ewa Moscicka	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I'm writing to respectfully oppose HB1378-HD2-SD1. This bill introduces major concerns—especially the restriction of the Works of Art Special Fund and lack of clarity around governance and funding. Please protect the integrity of the SFCA and vote NO on HB1378-HD2-SD1.

HB-1378-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/1/2025 5:32:35 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Carol Yasuko & Saleem Ahmed	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Dela Cruz & members of the Committee,

We strongly oppose HB1378-HD2-SD1. Our children benefitted from arts education programs & sang in the Honolulu Children's Opera Chorus. This Bill deletes dedicated funding to organizations & programs like this. It is our cultural & arts that makes Hawaii vibrant. This Bill threatens that. Please vote NO on HB1378-HD2-SD1.

Mahalo for your service to the State of Hawaii.

Carol Yasuko & Saleem Ahmed

HB-1378-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/1/2025 5:35:08 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Gaye Chan	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly oppose HB1378-HD2, which threatens the future of arts and culture funding in Hawai'i. There is currently few market opportunities for artists and cultural practitioners here. The passing of this bill would further undermine a sector that contributes to the vibrancy of our society.

HB-1378-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/2/2025 9:12:24 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Richard Bodien	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Destroy the arts. Fund professional wrestling. 🤼

HB-1378-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/1/2025 5:35:26 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kathryn Lathrop	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

I am submitting written testimony strongly opposing HB1378 HD2 SD1 which will cut funding for arts and culture education. It is vital for our communities to continue to provide arts and cultural education of our sacred host culture, which is beloved and necessary for youth to feel engaged, connected to their roots, and mentally and emotionally secure. It also will effect job security for many teaching artists and the administrators that help make it all happen. The feedback from students, teachers, and community members that benefit from the AITS program is overwhelmingly positive and should be respected by the people we have elected to serve our wishes and needs. Please do not strip us of the one thing that brings joy, problem solving skills, collaboration, creative expression, personal growth, and cultural awareness to our communities especially our youth!

Mahalo in advance for taking this seriously,

Kayti Lathrop

HB-1378-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/2/2025 9:14:26 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kiara Womack	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

In order to increase public accessibility to arts and culture we need The Works of Arts Special Fund, the Hawai‘i art community’s reliable source of funding year to year. HB1378-HD2-SD1 threatens long term funding for arts education in public schools, public arts programming, and support for local arts organizations. Please do not jeopardize funding for the arts, especially during a time when federal funding is so volatile. Please stand with Hawai‘i’s art community by opposing this bill.

HB-1378-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/1/2025 5:53:26 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Seema Sueko-Low	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha e Chair Dela Cruz and Members of the WAM Committee,

Mahalo for all you do for the people of Hawai'i.

I write today to **OPPOSE HB1378-HD2-SD1**. There are many reasons why this bill is harmful.

Here are just a few:

1. **SECTION 6 of HB1378-SD1 changes the law on Section 103-8.5, HRS. This cuts 100% the dedicated funding from the Works of Art Special Fund (WOASF) for arts education, the art in public places program, relocatable works of art programs, art display, upkeep, maintenance, repair, staff services, and restoration services, storage and transportation of art.**

Currently the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts (SFCA) receives \$5.5 million from the Works of Art Special Fund (WOASF). This bill would reduce the amount SFCA receives from this fund, disallow its usage for the above programs and services, and instead replace that with only \$4,028,811 in general funds to cover all the above referenced items AND the salaries of 17.50 Full-Time Equivalents of the SFCA staff. Further, general funds are not guaranteed funding. They can be reduced or cut at any time.

2. **This is not the time to put more burden on the State's general funds.** It's important to note that the most recent general fund appropriations for SFCA's operations and staffing have been around \$1 million (not including the special appropriations for Bishop Museum and Iolani Palace). In this time when the entire state is searching for ways to cover the loss of federal funds with state general funds, I don't see how the legislature can go from appropriating \$1 million to SFCA to appropriating over \$4 million. Where would that come from? The only responsible and sound choice to make in this economic environment is to maintain the current law and usage of the Works of Art Special Fund by opposing HB1378-HB2-SD1.
3. **This bill pushes SFCA to depend even more on federal funds,** which we all know are under threat by the administration of the current President of the United States. This bill pushes for 4.5 Full-Time-Equivalent staff salaries to be funded by federal funds. Further, three of the SFCA staff members are listed as being 100% funded by federal grants. What will the Legislature do if those federal funds don't come through? Furlough and cut these

staff members? Or appropriate more general funds for these positions?

4. **Not so special.** This bill purports to establish a "performing arts grants special fund." This sounds terrific at first glance, but upon examination of the funding sources, there is in fact nothing "special" about this "special fund." It is still dependent on general appropriations, federal funds, unspecified revenue, and adds donations and grants received. In doing so, it seems this bill is attempting to transform the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts from a State Arts Agency into a quasi-nonprofit. This effectively puts SFCA and the State in direct competition for private grants and donations with the very nonprofit arts organizations we aim to support. I believe this will exponentially harm the arts economy of Hawaii.

Please vote NO on HB1378-SD1.

Mahalo for your careful deliberation,

Seema Sueko-Low

HB-1378-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/2/2025 9:08:27 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Susan Mori	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha, I oppose this bill due to the proposed amendments related to the Works of Art Special Fund which would have a negative impact on the availability of funding for Art. This is particularly concerning at a time when our federal government is removing support for the arts organizations. We should maintain Hawai'i's historic support for Art and art education.

Mahalo,

Susan Mori

HB-1378-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/1/2025 6:16:49 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kim Richmond	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I'm writing to respectfully oppose HB1378-HD2-SD1. This bill introduces major concerns—especially the restriction of the Works of Art Special Fund and lack of clarity around governance and funding. Please protect the integrity of the SFCA and vote NO on HB1378-HD2-SD1

HB-1378-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/2/2025 9:02:35 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Brigitte Leilani Axelrode	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha kākou,

I am writing in strong **OPPOSITION** to HB1378-HD2, which threatens the future of arts and culture funding in Hawai‘i.

Arts programs help in the development of our keiki and give them an outlet to express that which they may not be able to otherwise. Art expands how we see the world and creates space for new conversations and connections that are vital for our community. It is a huge mistake to cut these programs in Hawai‘i.

1. **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.

2. **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 **OPPOSE** HB1378-HD2 and protect the Works of Art Special Fund, which has supported the arts and culture ecosystem for decades.

B Leilani Axelrode

HB-1378-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/1/2025 6:25:22 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Barbara Kahana	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Strongly oppose.

The arts are critical to a vibrant society. We should be increasing funding to the current process! It makes no sense to create a new process that has no clear definition or any idea how it will be managed or by whom. Bad bill, stop it now.

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

Date: Thursday April 3 at 10:00 am

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

From: Joy Prentice

Affiliation : Groove For Good, Hawaii SFCA

Subject: Strong Opposition to HB1378-HD2

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

Thank you for reading this testimony. The bucket of money under consideration for unwarranted elimination is an essential part of my household income. I am a Teaching Artist who works regularly under contract with the Hawaii SFCA servicing multiple schools each year. The content and exposure I provide **has a direct impact on student attendance and their desire to succeed in school.**

The reliable compensation I receive from your legislature to facilitate this critical education (at public schools) is not particularly high, but it does keep eggs on the table and fuel in the tank; which allows the students and myself stability and continuity. Despite our multi-talented contributions to business and crisis recovery, Artists in our U.S. society are rarely paid amounts equivalent to our worth. However, like priests and caregivers it is a *calling* to minister to the community with our skill and talent. **We do it because of the positive influence of stewardship we achieve on behalf of our community.** Yet, the latter will not be an option if “eggs and fuel” are not guaranteed.

I am submitting testimony in **strong OPPOSITION to HB1378-HD2**, which threatens the future of arts and culture funding in Hawai‘i.

Investment in the Arts is a sign of intelligence. Artists and persons who facilitate or manage artistic events are an asset to the economy. **We have no interest in being cast out as a liability. That would be illogical.** In this time of federal cuts and uncertainty, it is essential to **keep funding for our income and impact alive - WITH STATE PRIDE.** Hawaii state is a shining example of pride in the Arts with it’s “1% for Art “ investment. **It is something to be modeled and bragged about.** Please do not disrupt this historical tradition of respect for the necessity of Hawaii Arts and Culture Kumu’s and Artists.

I trust you agree that what would be lost by passing HB1378-HD2 would be irreplaceable. This is needed to protect the future of arts programs and protect culture and the arts for our keiki and society in general. By showing that we value and respect culture and the arts, we **support the well-being of our community** and its artists and practitioners.

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

OPPOSE HB1378-HD2 and **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. **With your vote support, I will be able to continue to serve the 300 students I am scheduled to teach in SY2025-2026.**

Sincerely,

JOY PRENTICE

JOY PRENTICE

Natl Teaching Artist

UDL & SEL Facilitator

MEd. S.T.E.A.M.

EdD. Candidate (Chaminade)

Groove For Good

Groove ~ Grow ~ Give Back

HB-1378-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/1/2025 7:18:16 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Dayva Escobar	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Oppose!

HB-1378-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/2/2025 8:57:33 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Cosmo Brossy	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Date: April 2, 2025

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

From: Cosmo Brossy

Affiliation: Arts Worker

Subject: Strong Opposition to HB1378-HD2

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

My name is Cosmo Brossy, I'm a Honolulu resident. I'm an arts manager, artist, arts appreciator. I strongly oppose HB1378-HD2, which threatens the future of arts and culture funding in Hawai'i.

Art and creative expression is at the core of what makes us human. We know it is a great measure of the health of a community or society. The funding for the Arts in Hawaii is crucial to the well being of the community. Hawaii is incredibly forward thinking and should celebrate its arts funding, not continuously attempt to strip it away. 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,

Cosmo Brossy

HB-1378-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/1/2025 6:18:03 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
JW	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please do not direct funds away from the SFCA. I believe they do amazing work to help the artists, especially K12 and our universities, get more recognition and opportunities!!

HB-1378-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/1/2025 6:37:33 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Anna Ah Sam	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I vehemently oppose defunding the State Foundation on Culture and Arts. Culture and art are integral to our State's identity and values. Now more than ever we need culture and art for our keiki in the schools, for the tourists who visit our islands, and for ourselves as residents of this unique and beautiful State.

HB-1378-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/2/2025 8:53:41 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Mary Ann A Lentz	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

To: Senator Donovan M. Dela Cruz, Chair, Senator Sharon Y. Moriwaki, Vice Chair, and members of the Committee on Ways and Means

From: Mary Ann A Lentz, resident of Honolulu

Affiliation: none; former SFCA grantee as Hawaiian Mission Houses Historic Site and Archives which supported staffing for tours by schools as well as general public

Subject: Strong Opposition to HB1378 HD2 SD1

Dear Senators:

I strongly oppose HB 1378-HD2 SD1.

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 urge you to **vote no** on HB 1378-HD2

Mahalo for this opportunity to present testimony.

HB-1378-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/2/2025 8:50:13 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Elise von Dohlen	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Moriwaki, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Elise von Dohlen. I reside in Honolulu and am an advocate for the essential importance of arts and culture experiences for our community.

I strongly oppose HB 1378 HD2 SD1 which will restrict use of the works of arts special fund to costs related to the acquisition, planning, design, and construction of works of art. Shifting State Foundation on Culture and the Arts' operating costs including interpretive work, which includes arts education, to general funds and other funding sources, threatens the long-term stability of arts and culture funding.

Hawai'i was the first state in the country to adopt a percent-for-art law. For over 36 years, the works of arts special fund has supported a thriving arts & culture sector. SFCA's Artists in the Schools program is supported by this fund. This program funds teaching artists to partner with schools to increase access to arts education for keiki throughout the state. This program falls under interpretive work and is at risk of severe funding cuts.

Arts and culture programs continue to be underfunded, and the impact of this bill would greatly impact local arts organizations, local artists, and cultural practitioners; and decrease access to arts for youth. We have seen how essential arts and culture are to the fabric of our community and support our individual and collective well-being, especially in times of disaster.

There has been abundant testimony submitted from keiki, organizations, artists, and community advocates in opposition to this bill. At a time when arts & culture funding is threatened on a national level, it is important for Hawai'i to reaffirm its commitment to arts & culture. I urge the committee to vote against HB 1378 HD2 SD1.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony.

HB-1378-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/1/2025 6:51:55 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Nicole Ishii	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please protect the arts. It creates community when the world seems so divided today. Please do not be a part of destroying our community.

HB-1378-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/1/2025 6:51:55 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Nicole Ishii	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please protect the arts. It creates community when the world seems so divided today. Please do not be a part of destroying our community.

HB-1378-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/1/2025 6:56:00 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
minda goodman	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

This is the good in Hawaii we need to protect.

April 1, 2025

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

My name is Saki Kashimura, and I am the English Learner (EL) Program Coordinator and teacher at R. L. Stevenson Middle School in Honolulu, Hawaii. **I strongly oppose HB1378-HD2**, which threatens the future of arts and culture funding in Hawaii. The Works of Art Special Fund supports Hawaii's children, positively impacting their learning and education opportunities. It allows students to explore art and apply their learning to writing and oracy, through sharing and presentations. If this dedicated funding is cut and restricted, it will affect public financing, jobs, and programs across the state and inevitably impact our keiki in our public schools. The short-term funding gains do not benefit our children's long-term benefits that they learn through arts integration that we can provide through the Works of Art Special Fund.

As an EL teacher who teaches students of over 15 languages, ethnicities, and multiple cultures, where English is not their first language, it is difficult for them to express themselves, especially at the emergent level. Through the Artists in the Schools (AITS) grant, we have been continuously able to bring a Teaching Artist to our school, providing time for arts integration and allowing students to explore art, learn about themselves, and share their culture with our diverse population of students, teachers, and staff members.

Art has been an integral part of our school community, and it has been eye-opening for our teachers to see students shine differently, connect learning through arts integration, and break out of their shells and become student leaders, docents, and art teachers themselves for their peers through developed confidence and self-worth. Parents and families of our EL students have also participated in our annual EL AITS exhibition, showcasing the students' artwork and writing pieces. These opportunities have also provided families time to connect and create memories as they celebrated their child's achievements.

Art and culture are vital to Hawaii, and we support the keiki through The Works of Art Special Fund. **Please oppose HB1378-HD2** to continue giving our students vital opportunities and education through arts integration in our public schools.

Thank you for your time and consideration,

Saki Kashimura
EL Coordinator
R. L. Stevenson Middle School

Date: April 2, 2025

To: Chair Donovan Dela Cruz, Vice Sharon Moriwaki, and Members of the Senate Committee on Ways and Means

From: Elizabeth Lentz-Hill

Affiliation: Independent Performing Artist

Subject: Strong Opposition to HB1378 HD2 SD1

Aloha Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Moriwaki, and Members of the Committee,

I am an independent performing artist, and I **oppose HB 1378 HD2 SD1**.

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.

Stable funding for arts and culture is important at any time; in the current political and economic climate, it is vital.

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 SD1.

Mahalo for the opportunity to express my **opposition to HB 1378 HD2 SD1**.

With aloha,
Elizabeth Lentz-Hill
Honolulu, HI 96826

HB-1378-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/1/2025 8:02:24 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

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

Comments:

I am writing to oppose HB1378 HD2 SD1. Restrictions on the use of the Works of Art Special Fund pose a threat to programs like Artists in the Schools and Art in Public Places. I have witnessed the benefits these programs have on Hawaii's youth as a teaching artist, and to put them in jeopardy of continuing would be devastating. Please protect the integrity of the SFCA and vote NO on HB 1378 HD2 SD1. Mahalo and Aloha

HB-1378-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/1/2025 8:12:46 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
William Bartek	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am writing to respectfully oppose HB1378-HD2-SD1. This bill introduces major concerns—especially the restriction of the Works of Art Special Fund and lack of clarity around governance and funding. Please protect the integrity of the SFCA and vote NO on HB1378-HD2-SD1. It is imperative we safeguard our creative community and protect the work they contribute to our success as a people and state.

Aloha, William Bartek, SAG

HB-1378-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/1/2025 8:21:47 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Emma Layton	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

This bill introduces major concerns for me and many in my community, especially the restriction on the Works of Art Special Fund and the overall lack of clarity and transparency around governance and funding. Art, culture, and public education are the backbone of our community.

HB-1378-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/1/2025 8:14:48 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Gary Mak	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I oppose HB1378.

The proposed changes would effectively kill the Works of Art Special Fund. And place arts funding under discretionary political control, even as the 1% appropriation remains.

You are diverting funds for a named purpose to a different use and you should be more honest to the public what you are doing. For example, why don't you have the courage to propose repealing the 1 percent for arts and face the public honestly? You should also be honest with the public that the control of the funds will shift from arts organizations to political control. Will the communities arts funding be diverted to more lua's at the Waikiki Hilton, rather than to arts in our public spaces and Capitol Modern?

Thank you.

HB-1378-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/1/2025 8:24:37 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Ualani Davis	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha mai kākou,

I'm Ualani Davis, a Native Hawaiian artist and high school art educator and I strongly oppose House Bill 1378.

Art is the pulse of a community. It tells us the health and wealth of our culture.

This bill and a series of other bills attacking public arts funding comes at an interesting time. In the past 4 years alone, there has been a barrage on our sense of community, culture, and sense of security.

When a community is sick, art reflects that. When a community is hurt, art heals. And when art is supported and valued, so is the community.

Support for the arts isn't just about beautifying public buildings. You invest in what you value and public art needs your continued support.

You are investing in the health and wealth of our community so that artists today and artists tomorrow may know they are valued. It's for artists like me who benefitted from many opportunities that would cease to exist if this bill were passed, and people like your kids that will one day be the artists of our future.

Kids that need safe spaces to create, collaborate, connect, experiment, explore, and express themselves, and our kids need to know that there are people like you and me who care for, value, and invest in their future and all they have to offer as artists and creatives.

*We are deserving of a Hawai'i that invests in **that and a Hawai'i that invests in US.***

We're here. We are the community. We are the pulse. So ask yourself this: are you going to continue to invest in keeping this pulse alive?

Mahalo.

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

Date: April 3, 2025

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

From: Tracy Weinstein

Affiliation (if applicable): N/A

Subject: **Strong Opposition to HB1378-HD2**

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

My name is Tracy Weinstein, and I am a community member and government worker from Honolulu. I am submitting testimony in **strong opposition to HB1378-HD2**, which threatens the future of arts and culture funding in Hawai‘i.

Personal Story (2-3 sentences)

As someone who moved from New York City, the arts in Hawaii have been a tremendously impactful part of why the community here is so special. Culture is preserved, relationships grow, traditions survive, and generations are inspired through the arts. It is vital to the well-being of every age group and demographic in this community, that funding is preserved and continued. We need it now more than ever!

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,

Tracy Weinstein

(tracy.weinstein1@gmail.com)

HB-1378-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/1/2025 8:51:38 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Karolay Ochoa	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I'm writing to strongly oppose HB1378-HD2-SD1 because it could harm the programs and institutions that support artists, educators, and cultural workers across Hawai'i. While I'm not directly involved in the arts community, I see how important art is for our society. Especially when there aren't even many free, public spaces for people to gather and enjoy it.

For those who can't afford more expensive activities, these spaces are critical. They offer a chance to connect with others, express creativity, and experience culture. Art has the power to bring people together and strengthen our community.

This bill threatens these vital resources, and I urge you to vote against HB1378-HD2-SD1 to make sure that arts and cultural spaces stay accessible to everyone.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Karo

HB-1378-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/1/2025 9:04:15 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Noel Shaw	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

As someone who finds great release and solace in the arts, I write in strong opposition of this bill. If we strip our creative spaces of the resources necessary to birth into existence new realities, we lose out on hearing so many voices, of seeing so many expressions, of coming alive over and over again with all the excitement that the arts evokes in us. Please do not pass this bill, and fund the people, fund the safety that art expression brings.

HB-1378-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/1/2025 8:04:17 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Crystal DeRosier	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am concerned about the language of this bill and I oppose the proposed changes to replace or modify the Works of Art Special Fund, which threatens the long term stability of arts and culture funding here in Hawaii.

Since the pandemic we have seen a new seed blooming in the art community, with fresh opportunities and budding collectives of multi-generational creatives engaging and growing together in positive momentum forward. Please do not crush these tender sprouts just as they are beginning to see the sun. We are experiencing enough change and chaos in this world right now and need art more than ever.

I strongly oppose HB 1378-HD2.

HB-1378-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/1/2025 8:05:35 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Bailey Onaga	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I deeply oppose this bill that will cause detriment to the heart of our community. As a professional artist, several career opportunities will not be available. As a teacher, I have seen how the arts have benefitted the youth by encouraging self expression and critical thinking. Public art and opportunities to create art better communities and document stories that will be lost forever.

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

Date: Thursday April 3 at 10:00 am

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

From: Georgia Ortega

Subject: Strong Opposition to HB1378-HD2

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

I am a dance educator, and an artist, and a supporter of all things of culture and arts! I am submitting testimony in **strong OPPOSITION to HB1378-HD2**, which threatens the future of arts and culture funding in Hawai'i.

Investment in the arts is a sign of a strong economy and thriving society. In this time of federal cuts and uncertainty, it is essential to keep funding for the arts alive. This is needed to protect the future of arts programs and protect culture and the arts for our keiki and society in general. By showing that we value and respect culture and the arts, we support the well-being of our community and its artists and practitioners.

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

OPPOSE HB1378-HD2 and 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,

Georgia Ortega dance teacher, choreographer, arts educator

Date: April 2, 2025

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

From: Lucy Alexander

Affiliation: Dept. of Education Teacher

Subject: Strong Opposition to B1378-HD2

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

I am a Honolulu resident and Social Studies Teacher for the DOE. 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 our community. It insures a chance for everyone to learn to express themselves artistically. As a teacher, I see how students all learn differently. Many students are able to accomplish learning outcomes through art history, creation, and observation. As a teacher of Hawaii and Pacific Island History, I see how important art is in helping students connect to Hawai'i traditional techniques. Without art, our education and future community weakens. We lose our unique identity.

With specific funding for art versus use of general funds, we insure protection for this keystone element of our culture. The arts support our visitor economy by providing visitors with an understanding of our unique culture. Hawai'i is our home and we need to maintain it's indigenous and evolving culture.

Please **OPPOSE HB1378-HD2** and 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.

With Aloha,

Lucy Alexander, Honolulu, HI

HB-1378-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/1/2025 9:10:13 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Sara Ricer	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I respectfully oppose HB1378-HD2-SD1. As it stands, this bill will restrict the Works of Art Special Fund, which will severely threaten crucial arts education, resources, outreach, and spaces in our broad community, as well as within many smaller organizations throughout our community.

Although I want to trust that the spirit of this bill is supportive of the arts, some still-vague aspects of the bill can potentially result in mismanagement or loss of funds for the visual and performing arts programs many of us hold dear in Hawaii.

I want to be sure that the WOASF is able to continue to support Local Artists and Cultural Practitioners, Artists-In-The-Schools, and Art in Public Places.

Please protect the integrity of the SFCA and vote NO on HB1378-HD2-SD1.

Thank you for your time,

Sara

HB-1378-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/2/2025 9:20:21 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Thomas M. Klobe	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Maintain the current **dedicated** 1% funding source for the arts. A permanent funding source like the Works of Art Special Fund is essential to sustain arts and culture funding.

HB-1378-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/1/2025 8:36:43 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Gunda Nollenberger	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

ALOHA,

I am writing to respectfully oppose HB1378-HD2-SD1. This bill introduces major concerns, especially the restriction of the Works of Art Special Fund (WOASF) and lack of clarity around governance and funding. Please protect the integrity of the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts (SFCA) and vote NO.

MAHALO

HB-1378-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/2/2025 8:47:03 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Lacey Brandt	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dear Representatives,

I respectfully oppose HB1378-HD2-SD1, which jeopardizes the Works of Art Special Fund and, consequently, Artists in the Schools grants. As a Marine Science teacher at Maui High School, I've witnessed firsthand the transformative power of these grants.

This year, a vetted teaching artist enriched my 11th and 12th graders' learning through quality instruction and art supplies. We've just submitted a grant for next year, aiming to further connect students' personal relationships with the ocean to their science curriculum through art.

However, the instability of arts funding makes it increasingly difficult to justify the significant time and effort required to develop these meaningful experiences. While we're committed to bringing art into the classroom, we rely on funding for supplies and dedicated class time.

Art transcends boundaries and connects hearts and minds. Please, preserve this invaluable opportunity for my students. As my students themselves have said: "I'm a visual learner so working on things creatively helps me understand the work we are doing." "Hands on activities help us connect to what we are learning and make it fun." "Learning different art skills like shading and working with different kinds of art stuff was my favorite part." These are not just art lessons; they are powerful learning experiences that resonate deeply with my students.

Sincerely, Lacey Brandt

HB-1378-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/1/2025 9:04:22 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Brienne Skees	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am writing to respectfully oppose HB1378-HD2-SD1. The fact that this bill passed with only one fully affirmative vote previously, and with written opposition from the Governor himself, should raise serious alarm bells for the WAM committee. This bill introduces major concerns - especially the restriction of the Works of Art Special Fund, and the lack of clarity around governance and funding. This fund has operated successfully in this capacity for decades and has provided innumerable opportunities for the arts community (and many more) across the State. Please protect the integrity of the SFCA and vote NO on HB1378-HD2-SD1.

HB-1378-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/2/2025 8:45:39 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Erik Ries	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha!

I'm writing to respectfully oppose HB1378-HD2-SD1. This bill introduces major concerns—especially the restriction of the Works of Art Special Fund and lack of clarity around governance and funding. Please protect the integrity of the SFCA and vote NO on HB1378-HD2-SD1.

Without art, what is the point of life? the one thing humans want and desire after food and shelter is storytelling... in whatever medium or form that comes... and art is storytelling.

Please vote "no" on HB1378-HD2-SD1.

Mahalo,

Erik Ries

HB-1378-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/1/2025 8:32:06 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Mari Erdman	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

While the intention to support performing arts through new grant programs is laudable, it should not come at the expense of existing, stable funding mechanisms that have successfully supported Hawaii's arts and culture.

Therefore, I respectfully oppose HB1378 HD2 SD1 in its current form and urge lawmakers to reconsider. Preserving and enhancing our state's commitment to the arts requires maintaining dedicated funding streams that ensure long-term sustainability and growth of Hawaii's vibrant cultural landscape.

HB-1378-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/2/2025 8:43:46 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Emerson Goo	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

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

Aloha mai kākou-

I am a writer, urban planner, art/film critic and film programmer from and based in Honolulu, and a supporter of all things of culture and arts! **I am submitting testimony in strong OPPOSITION to HB1378-HD2, which threatens the future of arts and culture funding in Hawai'i.**

Investment in the arts is a sign of a strong economy and thriving society. In this time of federal cuts and uncertainty, it is essential to keep funding for the arts alive. This is needed to protect the future of arts programs and protect culture and the arts for our keiki and society in general. By showing that we value and respect culture and the arts, we support the well-being of our community and its artists and practitioners.

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.

As someone who is profoundly deaf and advocates for greater accessibility and disabled representation in Hawai'i's arts programming, I also want to note that a robust source of public funding, such as that provided by the Works of Art Special Fund, is necessary to ensure that art programs and activities have the resources needed to be inclusive of Hawai'i's disability

community through outreach and education initiatives, the development of accessible and barrier-free exhibitions, and other important measures.

Please OPPOSE HB1378-HD2 and 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,
Emerson Goo

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

Date: 4/3/2025

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

From: Christine (Mauliola) Cook

Affiliation (if applicable): Community Member

Subject: Strong Opposition to HB1378-HD2

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

My name is Mauliola (Christine) Cook and I am a dancer, teaching artist, 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.

As a longtime hula practitioner, I have witnessed how the arts not only preserve our cultural traditions, but also create opportunities for our keiki to develop pride in who they are and where they come from. Creative Dance programs in schools have touched the hearts spirits minds and bodies of hundreds of school children on Kaua‘i. I have been teaching creative dance for over 40 years. The joy and learning that I see in the keiki is very rewarding.

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.

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.

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

Sincerely,

Mauliola (Christine) Cook

HB-1378-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/2/2025 8:43:14 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

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

Comments:

Aloha Chair, Vice Chair, and Committee Members,

I oppose HB1378-HD2-SD1. This bill introduces major concerns—especially the restriction of the Works of Art Special Fund and the lack of clarity around governance and funding. Please protect the integrity of the SFCA and vote NO on HB1378-HD2-SD1.

Aloha,

Shannon M.

Hawai'i Island Resident

Date: April 1, 2025

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

From: Toni Chieko Kealohilani Silva

Affiliation: Artist

Subject: Strong Opposition to HB1378-HD2

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

My name is Toni Silva. I am a Native Hawaiian artist who was born and raised in Honolulu. I am also an illustrator, and like many of my peers I have provided my skills as an artist to a multitude of clients as part of my income; clients who range from independent authors like Ashley Nakanishi to nonprofit organizations like Purple Mai'a --- majority of whom are based in Hawai'i. I **strongly oppose HB1378-HD2**, which threatens the future of arts and culture funding in Hawai'i.

In the short time that I had finally begun planting the seeds of my own community, there is now a threat that could rip it all away before it even bears any fruit. This bill will not only cut the funding from artists like myself who are creating a living for ourselves right now, but also dash the hopes of new artists in the future that will arrive after us and wish to grow the communities that are being threatened right now. I understand our finances are becoming more stringent by the minute under the current legislation, but that should not be an excuse to remove the one thing that has sustained the Tourist Industry of Hawai'i by enticing visitors to experience our native culture on an intimate level while supporting the local population directly.

Key Points that have been pointed out by several of my peers:

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, particularly at such a critical time when many other foundations have begun falling apart.

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

Sincerely,

Toni Chieko Kealohilani Silva, Honolulu, HI

HB-1378-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/2/2025 8:42:35 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Joy Sanchez	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I respectfully oppose HB1378-HD2-SD1. As it stands, this bill will restrict the Works of Art Special Fund, which will severely threaten crucial arts education, resources, outreach, and spaces in our broad community, as well as within many smaller organizations throughout our community.

Although I want to trust that the spirit of this bill is supportive of the arts, some still-vague aspects of the bill can potentially result in mismanagement or loss of funds for the visual and performing arts programs many of us hold dear in Hawaii.

I want to be sure that the WOASF is able to continue to support Local Artists and Cultural Practitioners, Artists-In-The-Schools, and Art in Public Places.

Please protect the integrity of the SFCA and vote

NO on HB1378-HD2-SD1.

Thank you for your time,
Joy Sanchez

HB-1378-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/2/2025 8:37:25 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Costanza Pernigotti	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I respectfully ask you to stop this bill. The arts are an essential part of a thriving community, something that benefits all and enriches society for generations to come. I worry about the impact this bill might have. Mahalo

HB-1378-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/1/2025 10:12:30 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Janet Tran	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

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

Date: April 3, 2025

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

From: Janet Tran

Affiliation: Honolulu Museum of Art/Community Programs Teacher and Artist

Subject: Strong Opposition to HB1378-HD2

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

My name is Janet Tran, and I am an educator and artist from Honolulu, Oahu. I am submitting testimony in **strong opposition to HB1378-HD2**, which threatens the future of arts and culture funding in Hawai‘i.

Funding for Arts in Hawai‘i is critically needed to ensure that continued opportunities for the arts can foster a thriving environment for creating, viewing, while providing equitable access across our islands. Our local arts culture forms foundational pathways for an individual to find communities and in turn positively strengthen their relationships towards social, emotional, and mental well-being – especially during particularly tumultuous times we have and continue to live in at this very moment. It is a lifeline for so many and one worth maintaining.

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,
Janet Tran
HoMA-Community Programs Teacher

HB-1378-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/1/2025 10:07:06 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

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

Comments:

Aloha Chair and members of this committee,

My name is Maki Morinoue, and I urge you to **OPPOSE HB1378-HD2-SD1**, as it would *devastate* arts funding and *dismantle a long-standing commitment* to cultural and economic sustainability in Hawai‘i. Also, there is no clear path to proper funding allocations in writing from other sources.

The Works of Art Special Fund and the percent-for-art law have been a cornerstone of our state’s investment in the arts, providing a stable funding source that fuels economic prosperity, education, and community well-being. Eliminating or reducing this funding would have catastrophic consequences for artists, cultural practitioners, and local businesses that depend on the creative economy.

The Arts Are an Economic Engine

The arts are not a luxury—they are a major driver of our economy:

- The U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis reports that arts and culture contribute \$1.10 trillion to the national GDP.
- The nonprofit arts and culture sector alone generates \$166.3 billion in economic activity, supporting 4.6 million jobs and returning \$27.5 billion in tax revenue.
- Performing arts presenters saw a 122% increase in economic impact post-pandemic, surpassing pre-pandemic levels, demonstrating the sector’s resilience and importance.

Cutting arts funding would weaken local businesses, reduce tourism revenue, and eliminate jobs in an industry that helps sustain Hawai‘i’s unique identity.

A Threat to Education and Community Well-Being

Beyond economics, arts education enhances academic success, fosters creativity, and improves mental health. Communities with strong arts programs experience:

- Higher student engagement and achievement.
- Increased community cohesion and civic participation.
- A richer cultural landscape that attracts visitors and residents alike.

HB1378-HD2-SD1 threatens this proven foundation of success by dismantling funding mechanisms that have kept Hawai‘i’s arts scene thriving for decades.

A Call to Protect Our Future

At a time when federal funding uncertainties loom, and economic hardships grow, now is NOT the time to strip essential arts funding. We must protect the Works of Art Special Fund to ensure stability for future generations.

I strongly urge you to VOTE NO for HB1378-HD2-SD1 and uphold Hawai‘i’s commitment to the economic, cultural, and social power of the arts.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.

Maki Morinoue
Holualoa, HI

Resources:

bea.gov

arts.gov

americansforthearts.org

HB-1378-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/2/2025 8:32:50 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Christopher Edwards	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

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

As a Hawai'i artist and arts organizer, I am submitting testimony in strong OPPOSITION to HB1378-HD2, which threatens the future of arts and culture funding in Hawai'i.

Given the current political environment, this is absolutely the wrong time to shift funding for the Works of Art Special Fund to a different source. The proposed general fund appropriation is temporary and comes with no guarantee of future support.

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. 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,

Christopher Edwards, artist and arts organizer

HB-1378-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/2/2025 9:22:15 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Cristina Holt	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha, my name is Cristina Holt, and I strongly urge you to reject HB1378-HD2-SD1. This bill would deal a devastating blow to arts funding in Hawai‘i, unraveling a decades-long commitment to cultural and economic sustainability. Additionally, there is no clear alternative funding plan outlined in writing.

For years, the Works of Art Special Fund and the percent-for-art law have provided a critical investment in Hawai‘i’s creative sector. These funds support not only artists and cultural practitioners but also local businesses that rely on the arts to thrive. Weakening or eliminating this funding would have lasting negative consequences.

The Arts Drive Hawai‘i’s Economy

The arts are not just about enrichment—they are a major economic force:

- The U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis reports that arts and culture contribute **\$1.10 trillion** to the national GDP.
- The nonprofit arts and culture sector alone generates **\$166.3 billion** in economic activity, supporting **4.6 million jobs** and returning **\$27.5 billion** in tax revenue.
- Since the pandemic, performing arts presenters have seen a **122% increase** in economic impact, surpassing pre-pandemic levels and proving the industry’s resilience.

Cuts to arts funding would weaken local businesses, reduce tourism revenue, and eliminate jobs—all while eroding Hawai‘i’s unique cultural identity.

A Direct Threat to Education and Community Well-Being

Beyond economics, arts education is a proven driver of student success, innovation, and mental well-being. Strong arts programs lead to:

- **Higher student engagement and achievement**
- **Stronger community connections and civic participation**
- **A vibrant cultural landscape that attracts both visitors and residents**

HB1378-HD2-SD1 threatens all of this by dismantling a key funding source that has sustained Hawai‘i’s arts and culture for generations.

Protect Hawai'i's Future—Vote NO on HB1378-HD2-SD1

With economic challenges mounting and federal funding uncertain, now is NOT the time to cut essential arts funding. The Works of Art Special Fund ensures long-term stability for Hawai'i's creative economy and cultural legacy.

I urge you to **vote NO on HB1378-HD2-SD1** and stand firm in supporting the economic, social, and cultural benefits that the arts bring to our state.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.

Cristina Holt

Hilo, HI

Resources:

bea.gov

arts.gov

americansforthearts.org

HB-1378-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/1/2025 10:08:34 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Melissa Chan	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Public access to art and the opportunity to learn art is essential to the quality of life for every resident in Hawaii. It expands beyond the eye, impacting education, brain development, self expression/explorarion, and scientifically correlated affects on happiness for kids and adults. As a person who's identity has greatly benefited from the arts and has built a career/livelihood based on it, is why I oppose this bill due to the negative impacts it can have on the community in the present and future.

HB-1378-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/2/2025 8:32:33 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Laurie Luczak	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dear Chair Lee, Vice Chair Inouye, and Member of the Committee:

I'm submitting this testimony as a private citizen, but I also want you to know that I am a Middle School Principal. I was a high school teacher, and elementary Vice Principal and Principal, and now serve our keiki and ohana at the middle level. Art funding and the support of the arts is crucial to the well being of people. Art has the ability to calm, nourish, and nurture. It communicates feelings when words cannot be uttered or when the pain is so deep that the individual is numb. It is also used to bridge communities, heal relationships, and celebrate joyous occasions. In other words Art is the manifestation of a civilization, a society, that recognizes the complex nature of being human.

Art, whether it is fine arts or performing arts, elevates a community and builds intelligence too. While I am not a performer and would certainly not consider myself an artist, I have witnessed the power Art has. Art is often misunderstood and pushes one to really stretch our own understanding and imagination. And imagination leads to creativity.

Rather than abolish, that which challenges us to stretch and grow, we should embrace it as it makes us better people.

Mahalo,

Laurie Luczak

HB-1378-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/1/2025 10:22:09 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Serena Flores	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

I'm writing to respectfully oppose HB1378-HD2-SD1. This bill introduces major concerns—especially the restriction of the Works of Art Special Fund and lack of clarity around governance and funding. Please protect the integrity of the SFCA and vote NO on HB1378-HD2-SD1.

Mahalo,

Serena Flores

HB-1378-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/2/2025 8:27:43 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kristin Remington	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

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

I am submitting individual citizen testimony in opposition of HB1378-HD2-SD1 and respectfully asking that you oppose HB1378-HD2-SD1.

This bill introduces major concerns - especially the restriction of the Works of Art Special Fund and lack of clarity around governance and funding. Arts and culture are critical to the identity, wellbeing, and economy of Hawai'i.

This bill creates uncertainty and long-term financial insecurity at a time when the arts & culture community is beginning to flourish. Hawai'i has and is continuing to generate a vibrant creative and cultural ecosystem that should be safeguarded and given the protected financial resources it needs in order to continue.

I urge you to OPPOSE HB1378-HD2-SD1 and protect the Works of Art Special Fund which has supported the arts and culture sector for decades. Funding for arts and culture should remain essential, not optional.

Mahalo nui for the opportunity to testify on this bill,
Kristin Remington

HB-1378-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/2/2025 8:21:44 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Malialani	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

It is strange to me that we continual seek to defund the arts while claiming it is in pursuit of something better for us as a society. More money is poured into things like police, military, and tourism as if these are the only things we have to offer in Hawai'i. As if we do not have a rich and beautiful culture spanning centuries on these islands that includes art as a way of life. Art and support of the arts is the only way we make it through life doing more than surviving. Art has the opportunity to inspire, to grow, to teach, to develop communities and individuals.

I oppose HB1378 HD2 SD1 in the strongest terms possible and hope that Hawai'i Legislature can see how vital art is for us as a society; culturally, emotionally, structurally, and more.

HB-1378-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/1/2025 10:43:09 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Shirley Lam	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha members of the committee!

I am compelled to express my strong opposition to HB1378 HD2 SD1. Each year, we witness a concerning trend aimed at eroding the percent-for-art law, and I am eager to learn the true intentions and motivations. The evolution from HB1378 to HB1378 HD2, and now to HB1378 HD2 SD1, raises profound questions about trust and commitment to preserving our cultural heritage.

When funding diminishes, the arts sector often bears the brunt of cuts. The percent-for-art law was established precisely to safeguard a critical yet undervalued aspect of our society. This bill poses a grave threat to the enduring support of Hawai'i's artistic community, as well as the public schools that benefit from this invaluable resource. Hawai'i was a pioneer in adopting the percent-for-art law, serving as an inspiration for 27 other states and territories to follow suit. I stand firmly against any amendments to the Works of Art special fund.

As a visual artist, I have experienced the transformative power of art. It is a dynamic force woven into the very fabric of human experience. This understanding emphasizes the profound importance of the creative process and the deep engagement with art, rather than merely focusing on the end product. Creativity is not an optional accessory; it is a fundamental human experience that fosters self-expression, communication, emotional release, and social impact. Last year, I was privileged to co-curate an exhibition with my mentor, showcasing eleven exceptional photographers from Hawai'i, each one not only mastered darkroom printing but their work is the vital storyteller of our rich history.

Can we truly envision a society that disregards the nurturing of the arts, reducing artists and their creations as mere commodities? We must critically examine the reasons behind the state's preference for lavish wave pools and towering high-rises, rather than channeling resources into truly impactful investments that honor and nurture the rich cultural heritage and the very spirit of the people of Hawai'i!

I urge you to uphold the integrity of §103-8.5, the Works of Art special fund, which is critical for the sustained support of Hawai'i's vibrant creative community. Thank you for your attention in this pressing matter.

Respectfully,

Shirley Lam

HB-1378-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/2/2025 8:16:47 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Meleanna Meyer	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Oppose HB1378 HD2 – Protect Arts and Culture Funding in Hawai‘i Date: Thursday April 3 at 10:00 am To: Chair Chris Lee, Vice Chair Lorraine Inouye, and Members of the Senate Committee on Transportation and Culture and the Arts (TCA) From: Meleanna Aluli Meyer artist, and art educator

Subject: Strong Opposition to HB1378-HD2 Aloha Chair Lee, Vice Chair Inouye, and Members of the Committee, Aloha mai kākou- I am an art educator, and an artist, and a supporter of all things of culture and arts! I am submitting testimon in strong OPPOSITION to HB1378-HD2, which threatens the future of arts and culture funding in Hawai‘i. Investment in the arts is a sign of a strong economy and thriving society. In this time of federal cuts and uncertainty, it is essential to keep funding for the arts alive. By showing that we value and respect culture and the arts, we support the well-being of our community and its artists and practitioners. 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 General Funds Are Not a Reliable Replacement. The proposed general fund appropriation is temporary and comes with no guarantee of future support. 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 OPPOSE HB1378-HD2 Please 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, Meleanna Aluli Meyer, Artist, arts educator

HB-1378-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/2/2025 8:13:29 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Donna Kawasaki	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I'm writing to respectfully oppose HB1378-HD2-SD1. This bill introduces major concerns—especially the restriction of the Works of Art Special Fund and lack of clarity around governance and funding. Please protect the integrity of the SFCA and vote NO on HB1378-HD2-SD1.

Donna Kawasaki

Teacher/Waiāhole Elementary

HB-1378-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/1/2025 10:12:13 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

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

Comments:

Hello, my name is Kayla DuBois. Y'all are cutting arts funding so that Elon and Trump have one less speed bump, I see.

Hawai'i itself is a muse. Among other things, it's known for celebrating its craftspeople, preserving wisdom through art, and for the unique culture we create here together. Putting up barriers to engage with this gift disempowers Hawai'i and the people who call this place home. If our government does anything, let it empower its people to create.

Protect public arts funding.

HB-1378-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/2/2025 8:04:37 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Warren Loos	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I humbly ask that you oppose HB 1378 and support the art community in Hawaii.

The art community in Hawaii is thriving. It supports artists and their work, having a positive social and economic impact on our entire community. The arts provide so much for us all.

Mahalo nui loa,

Warren R. Loos

HB-1378-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/1/2025 9:10:07 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Margaret Sutrov	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dear Esteemed Representatives,

I'm writing to respectfully oppose HB1378-HD2-SD1. Please protect the integrity of the SFCA and vote NO on HB1378-HD2-SD1. This bill restricts the Works of Art Special Fund, halving funding to the Artists in the Schools grant, and limiting the role arts can play in our communities in multiple ways. Besides these initial cuts, it puts the arts on shaky ground regarding funding going forward.

I am a teaching artist on the Hawaii State Teaching Artists Roster. Through the Artists In The Schools grant I bring visual arts projects to students who don't otherwise get art experiences, and use drawing and painting to illuminate their learning in Science. They learn to observe closely, be creative thinkers, and make meaning out of their learning. In my residency this year, working in the Maui High Marine Science classroom I worked with 170 students. They used various art processes to visualize the first cellular life, the first diverse multicellular life of the Cambrian Explosion, and to study the skeletal structure of extinct whales and to imagine what they would have looked like. Next, they will be creating paintings of Hawaii near-shore reef species, connecting their learning to species in our coral reefs. These opportunities will be limited or lost by the changes to funding caused by this bill.

This is just one of many experiences I have created to meet teacher and student needs in the classroom over my 20 years as a teaching artist on Maui. I teach students to observe closely, and to be creative problem solvers-- skills that serve people in all professions, skills our islands need more than ever. The arts also teach us that our own perspective matters, and to value how other people see the world. In order to find our way forward, on my home island of Maui, in Hawaii, and in our country and planet, we need this. Please do NOT cut funding to the Works of Art Special Fund and put art funding on shaky ground.

Art is a tool for inquiry and illuminating our world, for making things we can't quite fathom visible, for exploring thoughts and feelings that have no other avenue--and that can lead to discoveries, ideas, and solutions that change our world. Art is necessary for wellbeing, for mental health, for innovation. Its impacts are more often qualitative than quantitative, so it has to fight for funding. However, cutting the arts, especially art experiences that reach students in our schools, is watering down the quality of our future.

Mahalo nui loa.

HB-1378-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/2/2025 8:03:51 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Lanakila Makua	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I highly oppose this bill! The State Foundation on Culture and Arts has been a pillar of our community for decades. As a student representative in 1995-96 I first hand witnessed the diligent thorough process the committee did in the selection of local artisans with each proposal. Through their work we have many examples of exceptional work in our state. Traditional and contemporary local artist depend on these projects to survive while enriching each building with thought provoking emotional masterpieces. Diluted funds for these important projects and programs is not an option! Art Lives and Thrives in Hawai'i! People come here from around the world to experience the beauty and culture unique to our islands.

Mahalo,

Lanakila Makua

HB-1378-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/1/2025 9:39:39 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Luna Malia	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I respectfully oppose this bill due to the restriction of the works of art special fund and lack of clarity around governance and funding.

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

Date: Thursday April 3 at 10:00 am

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

From: Evan Kharrazi

Affiliation: Professional dancer living in Honolulu and member of the Convergence Dance Theatre

Subject: Strong Opposition to HB1378-HD2

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

My name is Evan Kharrazi. I am a professional dancer living in Honolulu and member of the Convergence Dance Theatre. I am submitting testimony in **strong opposition to HB1378-HD2**, which threatens the future of arts and culture funding in Hawai‘i.

Investment in the arts is a sign of a strong economy and thriving society. In this time of federal cuts and uncertainty, it is essential to keep funding for the arts alive. This is needed to protect the future of arts programs and protect culture and the arts for our keiki and society in general. By showing that we value and respect culture and the arts, we support the well-being of our community and its artists and practitioners.

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

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,
Evan Kharrazi

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

Date: 4/3/25

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

From: Hana Yoshihata

Affiliation: Community Member

Subject: **Strong Opposition to HB1378-HD2**

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

My name is Hana Yoshihata, and I am an artist from 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. I implore you not to pass this bill.

Art saved my life while growing up and has continued to do so throughout my life, as it has done for so many in our community. As an artist living and creating in Hawai‘i, I have had the great honor of having works acquired by the Hawai‘i State Foundation on Culture and the Arts through funding from the **Works of Art Special Fund**. This crucial financial support has enabled me to continue living in Hawai‘i, creating art and contributing to our culture and community. Furthermore, having work in the Art in Public Places collection means it is publicly accessible to Hawai‘i’s keiki, where it just might inspire young creatives to express themselves, tell their own stories, and find paths towards healing and connection. This has, hands down, been the most meaningful part of my art career, and **HB1378-HD2** threatens the future stability of the funding that makes possible both the support of artists through acquisition of public art and accessible art programs for our students. Appropriation of funding from General Funds is simply not a reliable replacement, as there is no guarantee of future support for the next generations of creatives to thrive in Hawai‘i and shape our collective future and culture.

Please, for the sake of Hawai‘i’s artists and keiki and all of the enrichment they bring to our entire community, oppose **HB1378-HD2** and to protect the **Works of Art Special Fund**.

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

Sincerely,
Hana Yoshihata

HB-1378-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/2/2025 8:01:21 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Carl Jennings	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

According to a report by NEA’s Office of Research & Analysis and the Bureau of Economic Analysis, U.S. (Commerce Department), from 2001 – 2001, the arts contributed (value added) 2.9 billion dollars (3.9%) to *Hawai'i's* economy.

As I am pretty sure the state did not invest 2.9 billion in the arts over this period, that is a pretty good return on investment!!

As we see across the country today – federal and state funding is not reliable

Do the right thing and maintain *Hawai'i's* unique legacy in arts funding

<https://www.arts.gov/impact/research/arts-data-profile-series/adp-33>

HB-1378-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/1/2025 9:26:03 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Lucille Morelli-Vine	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

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

Date: April 3, 2025

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

From: Lucille Morelli-Vine

Subject: Strong Opposition to HB1378-HD2

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

My name is Lucille Morelli-Vine, and I am an artist & educator here in Honolulu. I am submitting testimony in strong opposition to HB1378-HD2, which threatens the future of arts and culture funding in Hawai‘i.

As an artist I know there are few jobs in the education system for artists since cuts back from the Bush administration. This funding for the arts sometimes is the only money that bring art related programs to communities that wouldn't otherwise get this exposure for its students. It's very important for learning, getting a balanced education & sense of self.

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.

Sincerely,
Lucille Morelli-Vine

HB-1378-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/1/2025 7:11:36 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Nikos Leverenz	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Moriwaki, and WAM Committee:

I am writing in strong opposition to HB1378, HD 2, SD 1, which proposes radical and untoward changes to the State Foundaiton on Culture and the Arts and restricts uses on the Works of Art Special Fund that would compromise programs like Artists in the Schools and Art in Public Places.

Although the potential expansion to include the performing arts is welcome, it should not come at the expense of existing programs or the funding streams that have sustained Hawaii's support for, and access to, public (fine) arts for over half a century.

Please defer this bill.

Mahalo for the opportunity to provide testimony.

HB-1378-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/2/2025 7:53:20 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

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

Comments:

I am writing in strong opposition to HB1378HD2SD1. There are so many concerns with this bill: Especially the restriction of the Works of Art Special Fund and the lack of clarity around governance and funding. Please do not allow this bill to move forward. Thank you. Celia Suzuki, concerned citizen.

HB-1378-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/1/2025 7:24:03 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Riley Nakamura	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I'm writing to respectfully oppose HB1378. This bill introduces major concerns; especially the restriction of the works of art special fund and lack of clarity around governance and funding. Please protect the integrity of the SFCA and vote no on HB 1378.

I am a young native Hawaiian working artist who constantly relies on SFCA as a resource to help get my ideas and push the Hawaiian narrative in Hawaii out! Please help us continue and even further push Hawaiian culture. Our Keith are ineeded to the proper resource and inspiration. Show them it's possible.

HB-1378-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/1/2025 7:31:54 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Blake Nakanishi	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

I am writing to urge you to oppose bill HB1378-HD2-SD1.

This bill cuts dedicated funding used for arts education by 100%, and replaces it with less than half the current budgeted amount in general funds which are unstable year to year. Our keiki deserve more than this. By cutting these funds we are doing a disservice to them and our community.

Please do not allow this bill to be passed.

Mahalo,

Blake

HB-1378-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/2/2025 7:30:31 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Erin Paris	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

As a Kama'aina artist who has had to move away from Hawai'i due to the challenge of supporting myself as an artist, I oppose this bill which puts funding for arts in Hawai'i at risk. Listen to the artists and organizations who have the best interest of the arts at heart. They are not the ones pushing for changes to their funding.

The artists of Hawai'i are immensely meaningful to the world. They are so incredibly unique and powerful. To do anything that would upend their stability could cause them to have to leave like I did. Do you want to lose these precious people who make Hawai'i so special?

The artists in Hawai'i set the standard for the aesthetic allure that brings visitors. Their fresh, contemporary perspectives keep the vision of Hawai'i current with the global zeitgeist. Without funding, the only artists that will be able to afford creating in Hawai'i will be retirees, which will age the global view of these islands. Have you ever seen the art in expensive locations that don't have arts funding? The art is often relegated to art galleries (shops) full of representational art with little conceptual meaning. It's dull. That kind of art doesn't attract early-adopters who are the heart of any lively scene. Fresh, contemporary art helps keep Hawai'i alive.

Listen to those who have the best intentions for the arts: the valuable artists of Hawai'i. Do not pass this bill and put the livelihood of Hawai'i at risk. Thank you.

HB-1378-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/1/2025 7:57:33 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Lynda Hess	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I oppose HB1378-HD2-SD1. This bill introduces major concerns—especially the restriction of the Works of Art Special Fund and lack of clarity around governance and funding. Please protect the integrity of the SFCA. Artists of all stripes are suffering more from government cuts than most. Please don't take any more away from us.

Vote NO on HB1378-HD2-SD1

Aloha, Lynda Hess

HB-1378-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/2/2025 7:02:39 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
pamela burrell	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha House Members,

I strongly oppose HB1378 !

By uplifting the arts in schools and in public settings you uplift the people.. We need lots of uplifting right now.

Please keep the arts program alive.

Mahalo,

Pamela Burrell, Kalihiwai, Kaua'i, 96754

Date: April 2, 2025

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

From: Kelly White

Affiliation: Member of Molokai Arts Center

Subject: Strong Opposition to HUse the edit icon to pin, add or delete clips.B1378-HD2

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

My name is Kelly White. I'm a Moloaki Home Owner. 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,

Kelly White

HB-1378-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/2/2025 6:54:30 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Forrest Leonard	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha, I'm Forrest Leonard, a ceramics instructor at Kamehameha Highschool. I'm writing to you in opposition to HB 1378, a bill that will have devastating impacts on the arts in Hawaii. By removing the funding that this bill is targeting, you will kneecap the arts economy here in Hawaii. Art is integral to our culture and our economy, and investment in the arts will always have a positive impact on our community. By removing this funding, you will make it impossible for many artists to sustain themselves. Additionally, this funding helps provide access to art education for thousands of k-12 students who otherwise would have no access. The arts are crucial to our culture, education and our economy. I hope that you choose to do the right thing and vote no on HB 1378, and help maintain the thriving arts community that exists in Hawaii.

Mahalo,

Forrest Leonard

HB-1378-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/2/2025 6:48:27 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

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

Comments:

I'm writing to respectfully oppose HB1378-HD2-SD1. This bill introduces major concerns—especially the restriction of the Works of Art Special Fund and lack of clarity around governance and funding. Please protect the integrity of the SFCA and vote NO on HB1378-HD2-SD1.

Noriko Donna

HB-1378-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/1/2025 9:53:54 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Reyna	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am writing to oppose HB1378. We need our arts and more clarity about the funding for them.

HB-1378-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/2/2025 6:43:07 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Ronald H Skees	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am writing to respectfully oppose HB1378-HD2-SD1. The fact that this bill passed with only one fully affirmative vote previously, and with written opposition from the Governor himself, should raise serious alarm bells for the WAM committee. This bill introduces major concerns - especially the restriction of the Works of Art Special Fund, and the lack of clarity around governance and funding. This fund has operated successfully in this capacity for decades and has provided innumerable opportunities for the arts community (and many more) across the State. Please protect the integrity of the SFCA and vote NO on HB1378-HD2-SD1.

HB-1378-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/1/2025 9:11:42 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

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, Executive Director of 'Ohina Labs, and VP of Hawai'i for NATAS, regional Emmys.

The arts have shaped my life in profound ways. Without them, I honestly don't know where I would be. As a full-time filmmaker and storyteller, I've witnessed how the arts can inspire, uplift, and transform lives—especially for at-risk youth, underrepresented communities, and emerging leaders. Growing up in Hawai'i, the arts kept me on the right path and encouraged me to dream beyond my circumstances. It's vital that we preserve this sense of wonder, creativity, and positive impact for our keiki, our community, and our future leaders.

I am writing to respectfully oppose HB1378-HD2-SD1. This bill raises serious concerns, particularly its restrictions on the Works of Art Special Fund and the lack of clarity surrounding governance and funding. I urge you to protect the integrity of the SFCA and vote NO on HB1378-HD2-SD1.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I appreciate your dedication to doing what's best for our community.

Mahalo,

Gerard Elmore

HB-1378-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/2/2025 6:42:41 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Roger Branon Rodriguez	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

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-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/2/2025 6:23:55 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Simone Fromen	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

My name is Simone Fromen. I'm an emerging artist and have benefited from the opportunities that Capitol Modern and the SFCA provides. I do not want to see other artists struggle or feel unsupported by the state because the SFCA is stripped of its full capabilities. Anything that takes away from others who have contributed so much to this state should not be supported. You all have benefited from artists who were made able to do what they do because of SFCA's support, and to see that go would be a great loss for all of us, artist or not.

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.

Performance art is important too, but this is not the answer to support them. Depleting one space to fill another does not make something whole, it just weakens the overall community and takes away opportunities that are so vital for many. **The SFCA's ability to support artists is a lifeline to some artists (who are residents, human beings, your people) and without it some may not be able to continue creating. This bill will only stifle creative voices in Hawai'i, a narrative we have seen time and time again. Please don't be part of it.**

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,

Simone Fromen

From: Nikki von Gnechten

Affiliation: Artist, Photographer, and Creative Professional

Location: Honolulu, Hawai'i

Subject: Testimony in Strong Opposition to HB1378-HD2

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

My name is Nikki von Gnechten, and I am an artist and photographer based in Honolulu. I was born and raised on the Big Island, and my work is a direct reflection of the landscapes, textures, and stories of Hawai'i. I am writing in strong opposition to HB1378-HD2 because it threatens the future of arts and culture in the islands-something that has shaped my life and career at every level.

I have collaborated with local brands and businesses across the state, using visual storytelling to uplift their visions and tell authentic stories through my lens. From fashion photography and graphic design to branding and creative direction, my work exists in that vital space where culture and commerce meet. I've built my career by connecting with people and place-by highlighting the raw, the beautiful, and the deeply human parts of Hawai'i through art.

What this bill fails to recognize is that the arts are not optional. They are a core part of Hawai'i's identity, economy, and emotional ecosystem. As someone who has dealt with trauma and mental health challenges, I can say with certainty: creative expression has saved me, again and again. The arts are how I've healed, how I've connected, how I've survived. For people like me-and many others across the islands-access to support and funding isn't a luxury, it's a lifeline.

Why I Oppose HB1378-HD2:

1. This bill strips consistent, protected funding from our arts community.

The Works of Art Special Fund is one of the few stable resources we have. Without it, countless programs, jobs, and opportunities will vanish-and many emerging artists won't stand a chance.

2. Replacing it with general funds is unreliable and unsustainable.

General funds shift with political priorities. Arts will always be deprioritized when the pressure is on. We need protected funding that ensures the arts can grow long-term, not scraps from a shrinking budget.

3. Art in Hawai'i isn't decoration-it's preservation, expression, and economic power.

Our cultural practitioners, contemporary artists, and young creatives carry the torch of tradition while adapting to new ways of living and creating. The arts draw tourism, support mental health, empower small businesses, and offer young people an alternative path. Undermining this sector is short-sighted and damaging to the future of our islands.

Final Thoughts:

I urge you to listen to the creative voices who are raising the alarm. Oppose HB1378-HD2. Stand with the artists, the cultural workers, the storytellers, and the communities that rely on this fund-not just to create, but to exist.

We need consistent support. We need to protect what makes Hawai'i unique. And we need leaders who understand that art is not separate from daily life-it is life.

Mahalo for your time and consideration,

Nikki von Gnechten

Honolulu, Hawai'i

HB-1378-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/1/2025 11:22:48 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Mary Lewis	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

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

Date: Thursday April 3 at 10:00 am

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

From: Mary Lewis

Affiliation : community member and arts participant

Subject: Strong Opposition to HB1378-HD2

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

My name is Mary Lewis and I have supported the arts in Hawaii since 1975 as a theatre artist, a grants reader, and a supporter and participant in the arts. I am submitting testimony in strong opposition to HB1378-HD2, which threatens the future of arts and culture funding in Hawai‘i.

In this time of federal cuts and uncertainty, we need to keep this funding alive in a safe manner. This is needed to protect our future by engendering empathy and protecting culture and the arts for our keiki and society in general. By showing that we value and respect culture and the arts, we support the well-being of our community and its artists and practitioners..

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,
Mary Lewis

HB-1378-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/1/2025 11:18:19 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kelsey Angel Baehrens	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

My name is Kelsey Angel Baehrens and I'm writing to respectfully oppose HB1378-HD2-SD1. This bill introduces major concerns—especially the restriction of the Works of Art Special Fund and lack of clarity around governance and funding. Please protect the integrity of the SFCA and vote NO on HB1378-HD2-SD1!!

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 Hawaii 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-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/2/2025 6:08:31 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Nicole Galase	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I oppose this bill as it will jeopardize the funding of art in schools and public places. It is crucial that our keiki grow up with access to art so they can experience other points of view and other cultures. Experiencing art grows kindness and we need more of that in the world.

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

Date: Thursday April 3 at 10:00 am

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

From: Amanda Brightbill

Affiliation : Teacher and arts participant

Subject: Strong Opposition to HB1378-HD2

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

My name is Amanda Brightbill and I support the arts in Hawaii as a teacher and someone who is passionate about the art. Just this year we have been able to provide our students with multiple opportunities to participate in art programs which has enriched their learning experience. I am submitting testimony in **strong opposition to HB1378-HD2**, which threatens the future of arts and culture funding in Hawai‘i.

In this time of federal cuts and uncertainty, we need to keep this funding alive in a safe manner. This is needed to protect our future by engendering empathy and protecting culture and the arts for our keiki and society in general. By showing that we value and respect culture and the arts, we support the well-being of our community and its artists and practitioners.

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,

Amanda Brightbill

HB-1378-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/2/2025 12:07:21 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Tiffany Beam	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

My name is Tiffany, and I am a 4th-year PhD student in Political Science specializing in Museum Studies at UH Mānoa. I live in Makiki and am represented in the House by Rep. Andrew Takuya Garrett, and Sen. Carol Fukunaga in the Senate. I am writing in strong opposition to HB 1378, and any efforts to defund visual arts in Hawai‘i. Defunding visual arts would be a significant loss—not just culturally and educationally, but economically.

Actors, dancers, singers, and performers are essential to Hawai‘i’s creative economy, but they are not enough to drive it. While they deserve investment, they represent a small part of the creative economy such that further investment should not come at the expense of visual arts funding.

Cities around the world have demonstrated the economic power of prioritizing visual arts and public art investments. This strategy has been crucial to the success of rapidly growing cities like Dubai and Abu Dhabi. The first thing Abu Dhabi did was prioritize establishing world-class museums and cultural institutions like Louvre and Guggenheim Abu Dhabi in their growth strategies. Cultural institutions put places on the map and spearhead economic growth. This is equally true with public art. Public art has been proven to attract tourism, enrich communities, and drive local business by making urban spaces more engaging and livable. Cities like New York, London, and Tokyo have long understood that investing in public visual art generates revenue, creates jobs, and strengthens their economy. An evident vibrant arts scene makes a place desirable to visit, to live in and to stay in, strengthening the overall economy while diversifying it too.

The economic power of visual arts extends far beyond cultural institutions. Visual arts are integral to industries like marketing, design, and film. The pop art movement of the 1950s and 60s, for example, laid the foundation for contemporary marketing, branding, and product design. When it comes to film and television, actors and performers play a critical role—but they are just one part of a much larger creative industry. The credits of every film are dominated by visual artists, set designers, costume designers, graphic artists, and many others. Today’s visual art education, exposure, and movements shape tomorrow’s marketing, design, and entertainment industries, all which provide tech-forward opportunities that allow Hawai‘i to complete economically.

Defunding visual art education, cultural institutions, and public art risks cutting off the talent pipeline for film, media, and design here in Hawai‘i—industries that are already largely outsourced. By investing in visual art education and local institutions, we ensure that these opportunities stay in Hawai‘i—whether for film productions, advertising, or major cultural events like the Hawai‘i Triennial. The Triennial, recognized internationally as the largest showcase of contemporary art in Hawai‘i, is a testament to the immense local talent that already exists—from artists, to technicians, curators, and other arts workers. The Triennial’s global recognition underscores that Hawai‘i is home to a vibrant, innovative creative community. But to keep this momentum going, we must invest in arts education and infrastructure that ensures current and future generations of Hawai‘i’s youth are prepared to carry this legacy forward across various industries.

Hawai‘i has immense potential to be a leader in the creative economy. We are already cultural trendsetters in many ways—just look at the global proliferation of musubi and poke shops in the last decade or less. The question is, how do we ensure that the trends we define return tangible benefits to our residents and local economy? The answer lies in cultivating and investing in our local talent, cultural institutions, and public arts, which is why we must reject HB 1378 and any efforts to defund the visual arts.

RE: HB1378-HD2-SD1

Aloha Members of the Committee,

My name is Jacie Miyashiro, and I am a teacher in the Central District on O'ahu. I am submitting testimony in opposition to HB1378-HD2-SD1, which threatens the future of arts and culture funding in Hawai'i through its restriction of the Works of Art Special Fund and lack of clarity around governance and funding.

As a musician myself, I appreciate the House Culture and Arts Committee's intention to support performing arts. However, artists in our community have raised major concerns about the proposal to support public art with general funds, which do not provide a consistent and guaranteed source of funding for arts programs. While it is admirable to want to appropriate money for performing arts, it should not be done at the expense of existing programs.

Art creates opportunities for connection like no other. When we returned to school in the 2022-2023 school year, I thought that the problems the COVID-19 pandemic created for education were in the past. And yet, I found that it was even more difficult to get students to engage with my English Language Arts curriculum and with one another. It was time to try a different approach. At the end of the school year, I tasked students with creating an art piece that evoked a theme from the novel we had read the previous quarter, then we voted on one student's artwork in each class which we would turn into a large canvas painting. Students became so engaged in our art project that many of them stayed hours after school in order to complete it in time to showcase at an event the teachers planned for students' families. The art project provided a space for student collaboration as they worked together to mix colors and negotiate space while working. Integrating art into my class reinvigorated my English Language Arts curriculum that year.

I would love the opportunity to incorporate more art into my teaching and work with the Artists in the Schools program in the future; however, I worry that that program's funding may not survive due to the proposed changes in this bill. Therefore, I urge you to oppose HB1378-HD2-SD1 and to protect the Works of Art Special Fund.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in opposition to this bill.

Respectfully,

Jacie Miyashiro

HB-1378-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/2/2025 2:04:08 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Alethea Kuulei Serna	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am opposed to HB1378. While it looks good on paper there is a lack of a clear implementation of the intent. Also, this is another attempt to add one more layer of bureaucratic management and minimization of public art funds and/or opportunities.

HB-1378-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/2/2025 2:04:00 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Tessa Skees	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am writing to respectfully oppose HB1378-HD2-SD1. The fact that this bill passed with only one fully affirmative vote previously, and with written opposition from the Governor himself, should raise serious alarm bells for the WAM committee. This bill introduces major concerns - especially the restriction of the Works of Art Special Fund, and the lack of clarity around governance and funding. This fund has operated successfully in this capacity for decades and has provided innumerable opportunities for the arts community (and many more) across the State. Please protect the integrity of the SFCA and vote NO on HB1378-HD2-SD1.

HB-1378-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/2/2025 2:00:36 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Monica Lee	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Moriwaki, and members of the Ways and Means Committee,

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 Honolulu resident, arts staff member, and culture advocate, I am writing to express my **strong opposition to HB1378 HD2 SD1 RELATING TO THE STATE FOUNDATION ON CULTURE AND THE ARTS.**

This bill, *like the previously proposed Senate Bill 119 in 2023 and House Bill 1807 in 2024*, poses a significant threat to the long-term stability of arts and culture funding in Hawai‘i. It proposes major changes to the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts (SFCA)—including restrictions on the use of the Works of Art Special Fund (WOASF)—that would severely limit the Foundation’s ability to sustain key programs like Artists-in-the-Schools and Art in Public Places. Furthermore, it threatens the very infrastructure that supports arts education and public art in our state.

This legislation has been repeatedly introduced, yet each iteration has been met with unsuccessful outcomes and widespread public disapproval.

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.

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 arts are not a luxury; they are an essential component of a healthy and vibrant society.

This bill introduces major concerns—including the elimination of essential staff support for public art programs; creating a new special fund for performing arts—but offers no clear plan for how it will be managed or funded; and the proposed changes are unclear, underdeveloped, and potentially harmful to Hawaii's creative sector.

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 our communities effectively.

Therefore, I urge you to reject HB1378 HD2 SD1. We must prioritize the preservation and growth of our arts ecosystem, ensuring that its benefits are accessible to all residents of Hawai'i.

Mahalo,
Monica Lee

HB-1378-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/1/2025 10:53:53 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Saumolia Sanchez	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly oppose the passage of this bill and stand with the citizens of Hawai'i to maintain the cultural arts for the enjoyment and mental health of the people of Hawai'i. There is absolutely no reason to disrupt and restrict Hawai'i's only reliable funding source. Protect the Works of Art Special Fund and Hawai'i's thriving art community by Voting NO on HB1378-HD2-SD1. This is the only sensible solution for a robust and thriving island community. Mahalo

HB-1378-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/2/2025 1:39:58 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kaiqing Su	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

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

My name is Kaiqing Su, I am a UH Mānoa student and I have been in Hawai‘i for four years. I am submitting testimony in strong opposition to HB1378-HD2, which threatens the future of arts and culture funding in Hawai‘i. The art community in Hawai‘i has been integral to my learning experience at UH, with artists and art work acting as the bridge connecting the university and the broader community. Art programs also bring in talents and artists internationally, fostering a healthy art economy and cultural exchanges.

For many, making art and enjoying art are not just leisurely activities, but inherent rights and means of survival. In this time of federal cuts and uncertainty, we need to keep this funding alive in a safe manner. This is needed to protect our future by engendering empathy and protecting culture and the arts for our society in general. By showing that we value and respect culture and the arts, we support the well-being of our community and its artists and practitioners. I thus echo community voices regarding the following 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.

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.

Yours,

Kaiqing Su

HB-1378-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/1/2025 10:59:27 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kina Takahashi	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Kina Takahashi

Tuesday, April 1st, 2025

To: The Honorable Members of the Senate Ka‘aha Kenekoa Committee on Ways and Means

Subject: Testimony in Strong Opposition to HB1378 HD2 SD1

Aloha Senator Donovan M. Dela Cruz, Senator Sharon Y. Moriwaki, and Committee Members,

I am writing in my adamantly strong opposition to HB1378 HD2 SD1, which aims to establish the Performing Arts Grants Program and Performing Arts Grants Special Fund, allow the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts to acquire property, and expand SFCA’s role in the arts community.

HB1378 HD2 SD1 ultimately threatens the long-term stability of arts and culture funding by dismantling the Works of Art Special Fund—Hawai‘i’s only dedicated and reliable funding source for the arts. In its place, the bill proposes federal and general funds, which are not guaranteed and will have to compete with critical state priorities such as housing and healthcare. This shift will cause major disruptions to essential arts funding and potentially lead to a huge loss of staff support for public art programs.

Here in Hawai‘i, state funding is crucial in keeping the arts and local culture alive. It is what breathes life into programs, performances, talks, and creative connections. Without a protected source of funding, the very programs that make the arts accessible—especially to underserved communities and students—will be at risk.

The Works of Art Special Fund has ensured long-term continuity of community values through art exhibitions, public events, and arts education. It has made possible what once seemed impossible, like the Hawai‘i Triennial, which brought communities and students into gallery spaces that many might not otherwise access due to economic barriers. Not everyone can afford to visit museums and galleries on their own dime. In Hawai‘i, where the cost of living is sky-high, arts funding must remain protected to ensure true accessibility.

In my own experience as Education and Public Programs Coordinator for the Hawai‘i State Triennial 2025, I have seen firsthand the impact of arts education and school field trips funded through SFCA. From crafting Limumuu planters with scientist and conservationist Ikaika Bishop—who collaborated with Korean artist Hyemin Son for the Triennial—to storytelling

through paintings with Montessori students at HoMA, it is evident that arts learning is deeply intersectional. Some students thrive with worksheets, others through oral talk story, while visual learners connect the dots through images, and tactile learners grasp concepts by engaging their senses. Eliminating stable arts funding means eliminating these essential learning opportunities and lessening inclusive learning environments for classrooms.

Hawai‘i faces unique environmental and cultural challenges that require thoughtful care and sustainable solutions. By advancing this bill, the state risks diverting resources away from existing cultural programs, concentrating decision-making power within a single entity, and reducing transparency in funding allocations. While the bill claims to support the arts, it creates structural imbalances that threaten grassroots, community-driven initiatives and independent artists.

Community is at the heart of Hawai‘i’s arts landscape. Without clear accountability measures and sustainable funding strategies, this bill has the potential to catastrophically weaken rather than strengthen Hawai‘i’s diverse cultural constellation.

For all these reasons, I strongly urge the committee to oppose HB1378 HD2 SD1. Mahalo for the opportunity to submit this testimony and for your time.

Sincerely,
Kina Takahashi
Education + Public Programs Coordinator
Hawai‘i Contemporary
kina@hawaiicontemporary.org

HB-1378-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/2/2025 1:04:27 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Fae Yamaguchi	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Date: April 1, 2025

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

From: Fae Yamaguchi

Affiliation: Artist, Teaching artist

Subject: Strong Opposition to HB1378-HD2

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

My name is Fae Yamaguchi. I was born and raised in Honolulu. I've lived here my entire life. I'm an artist and have shown my work locally, nationally and internationally. I am also a teaching artist and have teaching art to children for the past 35 years. **I strongly oppose HB1378-HD2**, which threatens the future of the arts and art education funding in Hawai'i.

Most recently I have taught through the Artists in the Schools. This program touches thousands of children on Oahu and the outer islands. Several weeks ago, I had the opportunity to teach children at Kauhaiki Village. Children are starved to create art. Art is about teaching children and adults to see things differently. It is about thinking outside the box and inspiring new ideas to problem solve beyond the given boundaries

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.

1. 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.

2. 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.

3. 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. In these chaotic times, dismantling the very foundation that sustains our creative and cultural communities would be huge step backward for Hawai'i.

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

Sincerely,

Fae Yamaguchi, Honolulu, HI

HB-1378-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/2/2025 9:27:45 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Tara Gumapac	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

My name is Tara Gumapac and I am an Artist and Arts Educator. I am writing on behalf of myself and my students on the impact the arts has on us.

The arts and culture is our lifeline to our creativity, our hearts and our minds. We grow as people and communities. Without the arts and access to the kupuna or kumu to teach us, it's like cutting out color from our lives; the air we breath and the social-emotional well-being of ourselves and our students.

I oppose this bill.

HB-1378-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/1/2025 7:41:20 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
andriana simone	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

“I’m writing to oppose HB1378-HD2-SD1. This bill introduces major concerns—especially the restriction of the Works of Art Special Fund and lack of clarity around governance and funding. Please protect the integrity of the SFCA and vote NO on HB1378-HD2-SD1.

The arts are what keep a culture alive, there are so many artists, practitioners and culture protectors who will loose jobs / ways to support artworks or viewings and events and this void will deplete the culture and strip down such a vibrant and active community. Please vote no.

Mahalo”

HB-1378-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/2/2025 12:26:42 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Catarina Bejarano	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I appreciate art, it is a way of expression, it keeps culture alive. This island is made of artists their voices are vital for the protection of Hawaii.

HB-1378-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/1/2025 7:57:44 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Dr. Rachel Klein	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair, Vice-Chair and Committee Members,

The arts are extremely important and funding for them is already scarce. HB1378-HD2 SD1 jeopardizes long-term funding for the arts in our state. Please ensure the continuation of the arts in Hawaii, and DO NOT pass this bill.

Mahalo for your time and attention to this matter,

Dr. Rachel Klein

HB-1378-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/2/2025 12:09:01 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Shelly Skees	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am writing to respectfully oppose HB1378-HD2-SD1. The fact that this bill passed with only one fully affirmative vote previously, and with written opposition from the Governor himself, should raise serious alarm bells for the WAM committee. This bill introduces major concerns - especially the restriction of the Works of Art Special Fund, and the lack of clarity around governance and funding. This fund has operated successfully in this capacity for decades and has provided innumerable opportunities for the arts community (and many more) across the State. Please protect the integrity of the SFCA and vote NO on HB1378-HD2-SD1.

HB-1378-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/1/2025 8:27:32 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Maile Yawata	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I OPPOSE Bill HB1378-HD2-SD1. The State Foundation on Culture and the Arts gives Hawaiian artists (visual, musical, literary, cultural) exposure and brings attention to their practices, educates the public through the many ways that art disseminates throughout the community. Through exhibitions, performances both musical and spoken word, through media: tv, books, magazines, creative and problem solving education through the Artists in the Schools program, to name a few. Importantly, support for the arts helps generate commerce and adds to the economic health and wealth of Hawaii.

I oppose limitations to the funding of this very valuable organization.

Thank you,

Maile Yawata

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

Date: Thursday, April 3 at 10:00 am

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

From: Kayla Oshiro

Affiliation: community member and arts participant

Subject: Strong Opposition to HB1378-HD2

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

My name is Kayla Oshiro, and I am a community member from Kāne‘ohe who had found healing through the arts. I am submitting testimony in **strong opposition to HB1378-HD2**, which threatens the future of arts and culture funding in Hawai‘i.

The effort to maintain the integrity of the arts is so important right now. In the past couple of months, we have witnessed just how quickly federal government funding can be withdrawn. The proposed general fund appropriation is **temporary** and comes with no guarantee of future support. This is critical considering Trump’s executive order “Restoring Truth and Sanity to American History” which calls to restore racist monuments and remove ‘Anti-America’ ideology. At this moment especially, we must remember that the arts preserve critical thought expression, and history. In Hawai‘i history, art is used to not just tell the truth of a group or person but to challenge assimilation efforts and dominant narratives of American imperialism. When the arts are in jeopardy, so are our rights and freedoms. I believe the board has a duty to protect that.

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,
Kayla Oshiro

HB-1378-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/1/2025 11:32:07 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Iolani Kuoha	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

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

Date: April 1, 2025

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

From: Iolani Kuoha

Affiliation: Hawaiian Language Immersion Educator, Vice Principal Intern, Community Member

Subject: Strong Opposition to HB1378-HD2

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

My name is Iolani Kuoha and I am a Hawaiian Language Immersion teacher, and a lifelong educator from the island of Moloka‘i. I am submitting testimony in **strong opposition** to HB1378-HD2, which threatens to undermine the future of arts and culture funding in Hawai‘i.

As an educator and cultural practitioner, I have seen firsthand how the arts uplift our communities and deepen our connection to identity. The programs funded by the Works of Art Special Fund help perpetuate ‘ike kūpuna (ancestral knowledge), empower our keiki with cultural pride, and provide essential healing and expression in challenging times. During the pandemic, art and cultural engagement were some of the only ways students felt grounded and connected.

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

This bill limits the Works of Art Special Fund, Hawai‘i’s only sustainable public funding source for arts and culture statewide. Dismantling it would devastate the creative community—leading to job losses, fewer educational programs, and irreparable harm to future generations’ access to the arts.

General Funds Are Not a Reliable Replacement.

Temporary general fund appropriations cannot replace the stability of the Special Fund. With many urgent priorities across the state, arts and culture programs will inevitably be sidelined if not protected by dedicated funding.

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

Our culture is what makes Hawai‘i unique—not just for residents, but for the world. The arts drive tourism, provide educational enrichment, and create strong, vibrant communities. Preserving this funding is a matter of honoring our past and investing in our future.

I urge you to **OPPOSE HB1378-HD2** and protect the integrity of the Works of Art Special Fund. Let us not strip away the very resources that nourish Hawai‘i’s soul.

Mahalo for the opportunity to submit testimony, and for your continued support of Hawai‘i’s arts and culture.

Sincerely,

‘Iolani Kuoha
Hawaiian Language Immersion Educator, TA Vice Principal
Moloka‘i
kuohaiolani1@gmail.com

HB-1378-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/1/2025 9:04:24 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

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

Comments:

The arts are an essential part of a thriving society. The increased quality of life provided by the arts is immeasurable. Funding by the state needs to be increased and secured, not diminished. The long term benefits highly outweigh the short term savings.

HB-1378-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/1/2025 11:07:02 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Joyce Ono	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I'm writing to respectfully oppose HB1378-HD2-SD1. This bill introduces major concerns, especially the restriction of the Works of Art Special Fund and the lack of clarity about funding and its governance. Please vote NO on HB1378-HD2-SD1 and protect the integrity of the Hawaii State Foundation on Culture and the Arts.

HB-1378-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/1/2025 10:15:47 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
KEALA FUNG	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

To whom it may concern,

Aloha my name is Keala from Honolulu. Im writing to respectfully OPPOSE HB1378-HD2-SD1. This bill introduces major concerns-especially the restriction of the works of art special fund and lack of clarity around governance and funding. Please protect the integrity of the SFCA and vote NO on HB1378-HD2-SD1.

Mahalo,

Keala Fung, Honolulu

HB-1378-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/1/2025 10:52:01 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kelly Ciurej	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

"M WRITING TO OPPOSE HB1378-HD2-SD1. THIS BILL INTRODUCES MAJOR CONCERNS-ESPECIALLY THE RESTRICTION OF THE WORKS OF ART SPECIAL FUND AND LACK OF CLARITY AROUND GOVERNANCE AND FUNDING. PLEASE PROTECT THE INTEGRITY OF THE SFCA AND VOTE NO ON HB1378-HD2-SD1.

HB-1378-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/1/2025 10:39:51 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Maxime Cuchet	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Chair, Vice Chair and members of the committee,

I'm writing to respectfully oppose HB1378-HD2-SD1. This bill introduces major concerns—especially the restriction of the Works of Art Special Fund and lack of clarity around governance and funding. As an active artist in Honolulu, I witness the benefits of the Fund's robust scale on a daily basis. I, and many of my peers, rely on the continued support from the SFCA to enable our prosperity. It is of the greatest importance to protect the integrity of the SFCA and vote NO on HB1378-HD2-SD1.

Sincerely,

Max High-Cuchet



3599 Wai'ālae Ave., Ste. 25 • Honolulu, HI 96816 • Phone (808) 732-5402 • Fax (808) 732 5432 • hihumanities.org

April 1, 2025

Aloha Members of the Ways and Means Committee,

My name is Aiko Yamashiro, and I am submitting comments on behalf of Hawai'i Council for the Humanities RE: 1378 HB RELATING TO THE STATE FOUNDATION ON CULTURE AND THE ARTS.

Hawai'i Council for the Humanities (HCH) is a local nonprofit supporting history, culture, stories, and civic and community events throughout our state. In 2024, HCH engaged 33,531 people through 209 events and invested over \$905,000 into our local economy through grants, programs, and partnerships. We work closely with State Foundation on Culture and the Arts on a number of projects that enrich lives, broaden perspectives, and strengthen communities. For example:

- SFCA grants have enabled more equitable access to programs like Hawai'i History Day, which supports the teaching of history and civics by providing curriculum, professional development and training, classroom materials, and interscholastic competition at no cost to the community. We serve grades 4-12, in partnership with 46 public, private, and charter schools on Kaua'i, Maui, Moloka'i, O'ahu, and Hawai'i in 2025.
- We collaborate with SFCA and the Hawai'i State Public Library System on the Hawai'i State Poet Laureate program, which organizes literary events that empower diverse voices to engage with social issues through storytelling and creative expression. In 2025 so far, poetry workshops and community discussions have been hosted by Kahuku Public and School Library, Mānoa Public Library, and Lāna'i Public and School Library, with additional events planned for Waikīkī and 'Āina Haina libraries. These events create safe spaces to explore issues like political polarization, LGBTQ experiences, immigration and health care, language loss and learning, cultural identity, and more.

Our partnerships with SFCA greatly increase public access to high-quality arts and humanities programming and resources across our state.

Our nonprofit relies on a federal grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities, the sister agency to the National Endowment for the Arts (which supports state arts councils like SFCA) and the Institute for Museum and Library Services (which supports our state public

libraries). Steady support from these three federal agencies over decades have brought hundreds of millions of dollars into our local economy and made possible thousands of meaningful local programs and resources. All three federal institutions of public education and public good are currently facing unprecedented cuts in funding and support. If the State of Hawai'i believes that the arts, culture, and humanities create a stronger, more connected, and more compassionate community, now is the time to bolster and steady state funding for our sector, not retract it.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify,

Aiko Yamashiro
Executive Director, ayamashiro@hihumanities.org

HB-1378-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/2/2025 9:30:59 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
ARABELLA ARK	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

AS AN ARTIST IN HAWAII FOR 53 YEARS, I AM FIRMLY IN FAVOR OF FINANCIAL SUPPORT FOR ARTS. PLEASE CONTINUE TO FUND ARTISTS AND ARTS PROGRAMS IN THE STATE AND ON ALL ISLANDS. MY TINY COMMUNITY OF MOLOKAI THRIVES ON THE ARTS PROGRAMS OF THE MOLOKAI ART CENTER. I AM A PAST PRESIDENT OF HAWAII CRAFTSMEN AND WE ENJOYED FINANCIAL SUPPORT FROM BOTH THE STATE, FEDERAL, AND PRIVATE SECTORS.

I AM PASSIONATELY OPPOSED TO ANY CUTTING OF ARTS FUNDS.

ARABELLA ARK

ARK CERAMICS

KAUNAKAKAI

HB-1378-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/2/2025 9:30:21 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Keri Meyer	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I'm writing to respectfully oppose HB1378-HD2-SD1. This bill introduces major concerns—especially the restriction of the Works of Art Special Fund and lack of clarity around governance and funding. Please protect the integrity of the SFCA and vote NO on HB1378-HD2-SD1.

As a member of the arts community on Maui and in Hawaii at large, I urge you on behalf of all of us, do the right thing and vote NO on this bill.

RE: Opposition to HB1378-HD2-SD1

Dear Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Moriwaki, and Members of the Committee:

I am writing to respectfully express my **strong opposition to HB1378-HD2-SD1**, as it poses a serious threat to the future of public art, arts education, and cultural programs in Hawai‘i. While I support efforts to expand the role of the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts (SFCA) to include performing arts, this bill introduces harmful and unclear changes that could severely impact existing programs that have long benefited our community.

The following outlines my main concerns of this bill:

1. Restricts the Works of Art Special Fund (WOASF) – By imposing limits on the use of the WOASF, this bill could jeopardize essential staffing and operational support for public art programs, including the successful Artists-in-the-Schools and Art in Public Places initiatives. These programs have played a crucial role in fostering creativity, education, and cultural preservation across Hawai‘i.
2. Creates a new special fund with no clear management plan – While investment in performing arts is important, this bill fails to outline how the proposed new fund will be managed or sustained, raising concerns about its feasibility and long-term impact.
3. Unclear and underdeveloped policy changes – The bill introduces significant structural modifications to SFCA without sufficient clarity, leaving Hawai‘i’s arts community vulnerable to unintended consequences that could weaken the state’s creative sector rather than strengthen it.

Hawai‘i’s arts and culture are essential to our identity, economy, and education system. The SFCA has worked for decades to ensure that artists, students, and communities have access to meaningful arts experiences. Any proposed changes should build upon this success—not dismantle it.

I urge you to **vote NO** on HB1378-HD2-SD1 and to seek solutions that expand support for the performing arts without undermining the vital programs and financial integrity of the SFCA.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'A. J. ...', written in a cursive style.

HB-1378-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/2/2025 9:36:59 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Denise Karabinus	Testifying for Honolulu Printmakers	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Oppose HE] 3 78 HD2 SD1 Protect Arts and Culture Funding in Hawai 'i

Date:

To: Chair Senator Donovan M. Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Senator Sharon Y. Moriwaki (Committee on Ways and Means)

From: Denise Karabinus,

Affiliation: Honolulu Printmakers

Subject: Strong Opposition to HB1378-HD2 SDI

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

My name is Denise Karabinus. I'm a Honolulu resident. I represent 150 members of the oldest printmaking Community in the United States - The Honolulu Printmakers. I strongly oppose HB1378-HD2 SD1, 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 SD1 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 SD1 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,

Denise Karabinus

Executive Director of the Honolulu Printmakers

HB-1378-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/2/2025 9:37:14 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Eric Chang	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dear Legislators,

I am a performing artist, arts administrator, a previous recipient of the SFCA Folk Arts Apprenticeship Award, and president of the nonprofit Hawai'i Museums Association.

I submitted initial testimony in strong support of HB1378, **but now oppose HB1378-HD2-SD1 in its current form.**

I still strongly believe that enabling SFCA to provide direct support for performing arts activities would greatly benefit organizations and projects involving performance presentation, 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.**

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 visionary 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.

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 statute is crucial to providing stable, consistent support for the arts and culture sector, protected and isolated from competition with other legislative agendas. The one percent is a long-term commitment to the deep value and unwavering support of arts and culture in our community. **Capping the annual amount that enters the fund effectively dismantles the one-percent structure, and cripples it forever.**

The original spirit of HB1378 – to create new funding for performing arts – would have a transformational impact on communities across Hawai'i. **The original components of this bill have merit, and should be explored further with a long-term sustainable vision applied. However, I oppose this amended bill because it severely restricts SFCA's most reliable source of funding, and threatens its future.**

Furthermore, it is highly disappointing that this bill moved out of committee despite overwhelming oppositional testimony not just from the public, but also from government entities.

I urge you to not support this bill.

Mahalo for your time and dedicated service.

Aloha,

Eric Chang

Honolulu, Hawai'i

HB-1378-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/2/2025 9:39:22 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
samuel schryver	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha, I respectfully oppose HB1378-HD2-SD1. This bill will inevitably lead to the de-funding of the Works of Art Special Fund. Please protect the integrity of the SFCA and vote NO on HB1378-HD2-SD1. Mahalos!

HB-1378-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/2/2025 9:41:03 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Nawahine Lanzilotti	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

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-SD1.

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-SD1 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-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/2/2025 9:41:44 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Russell Gibson	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I'm writing to share my continued opposition to HB1378 HD2-SD1. This bill introduces major concerns-especially the restriction of the Works of Art Special Fund and lack of clarity around governance and funding. Please protect the integrity of the SFCA and vote NO.

Respectfully,

Russell Gibson, Kailua-Kona

Respectfully,

Russell Gibson, Kailua-Kona

HB-1378-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/2/2025 9:42:24 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Cathleen Murayama	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I'm writing to respectfully oppose HB1378-HD2-SD1. This bill introduces major concerns --- especially the restriction of the Works of Artist Special Fund and lack of clarity around governance and funding. Please protect the integrity of SFCA and vote NO on HB1378-HD2-SD1.

I'm a retired public school teacher and while in-service had the opportunity to bring the late artist Connie Adams to Lihikai Elementary School on Maui through the Artist in the Schools program. It was an opportunity of a lifetime for all the third grade students to work directly with a professional artist. She captured their attention and creative talents with her lesson on Aboriginal paintings. It was amazing what the third graders were able to create with the teaching and guidance of Connie. For many of our students, art was their way of expressing their ideas in a non- threatening way.

Your NO vote on HB1378-HD2-SD1 would be very beneficial to all the people of Hawaii.

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Cathleen Murayama

Retired Elementary Educator

HB-1378-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/2/2025 9:44:04 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Noe Tanigawa	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha kakou, esteemed legislators,

In its current form, HB1378-HD2 -SD1 threatens the fabric of island life at a critical time by jeopardizing the Works of Art Special Fund. This bill threatens Hawai'i's cultural future by restructuring funding for our cornerstone of arts support, the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts. This is dangerous at a time when federal funds are in question. Remember that state support is crucial in the Islands, where we do not have big name corporations willing to invest in local culture and events to market themselves.

Economic pressures are destroying the fabled ease of living in Hawai'i. Everyday people are under attack from rising prices, wages that can't keep up, user fees, and vanishing services and community resources.

Through these times in the past, the Works of Art Special Fund has ensured long term continuity of community values expressed through artworks, events, and performances.

All Hawai'i benefits.

In the last twelve months, the SFCA made possible Aloha Teen Theatre on Hawai'i Island, the Kaua'i Songwriters' Music Festival, East Maui Strengthening Through Art, Hawai'i's Woodshow, the 47th Annual Prince Lot Hula Festival, Celebrating Sacada (Filipino immigrants) on Moloka'i, Friends of Palace Theatre and Hula Arts at Kilauea, Bishop Museum, Lana'i Academy of Performing Arts, Okinawan Cultural Day Camp for Kids, these treasures and many, many more on every island cannot exist without the current dedicated SFCA funding through the Works of Art Special Fund.

This is our cultural legacy.

Consider what makes Hawai'i a great place to live and work. HB1378-HD2-SD1 should not go forward as written.

Please invest in the spirit that allows us to face the challenges of living together in this very special place.

Thank you, mahalo for your service and consideration,

Noe Tanigawa

HB-1378-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/2/2025 9:45:43 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Mitchell Kuga	Testifying for Small Kine Gift	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am writing to respectfully oppose HB-1378-HD2-SD1. As a believer, participant, and patron of the arts, I am particularly concerned with the restriction of the works of art special fund and lack of clarity around governance and funding. Please protect the arts!

HB-1378-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/2/2025 9:39:49 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Moira Pirsch	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dear Senate Committee Members,

My name is Dr. Moira Pirsch, and I serve as the Education Director at the Maui Arts & Cultural Center. I am writing to express my strong opposition to HB1378-HD2-SD1. As an educator, artist, and long-time advocate for community wellness through the arts, I am deeply concerned by the implications of this bill for the future of arts education and public art in our state.

For decades, the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts (SFCA) has served as the backbone of arts infrastructure in Hawai‘i, helping to ensure equitable access to cultural enrichment for learners and communities across the islands. Programs like Artists in the Schools and Art in Public Places are not just important; they are foundational. They reflect the values of our state: creativity, culture, education, and aloha.

This bill’s proposal to restrict the use of the Works of Art Special Fund (WOASF) could effectively gut the capacity of SFCA to deliver its most successful and community-centered programs. These restrictions jeopardize staff positions, interrupt long-standing partnerships, and undermine a carefully built system that has supported thousands of students, educators, and cultural practitioners.

Furthermore, while the introduction of a fund for performing arts could represent a meaningful expansion, it must be done with care. HB1378-HD2-SD1 provides no clear structure, oversight, or funding mechanism for this proposed fund. It introduces ambiguity rather than clarity and risk rather than opportunity.

At the MACC, we see every day how the arts support student engagement, cultural identity, mental health, and educational achievement. These are not luxuries. They are critical to the well-being and resilience of our people. To destabilize the SFCA and its resources in this moment, when we should be investing more deeply in healing and connection through the arts, is profoundly shortsighted.

I urge you to vote NO on HB1378-HD2-SD1. Let us work together to strengthen and expand the role of the arts in Hawai‘i without sacrificing the systems that already serve us well.

Mahalo for your leadership and for your commitment to Hawai‘i’s creative future.

With deep respect,
Dr. Moira Pirsch, PhD
Education Director, Maui Arts & Cultural Center

HB-1378-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/2/2025 9:48:01 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Connie Chou	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am respectfully opposing HB1378-HD2-SD1. This bill restricts the Works of Art Special Fund and does not have transparency around governance and funding. Please protect the integrity of the SFCA and vote NO on HB1378-HD2-SD1. Art is what makes our aina and our culture special - it is what colors our lives.

HB-1378-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/2/2025 9:48:07 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Sara Samiano	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dear Members of the Committee,

I am writing today with deep concern and strong opposition to HB1378-HD2-SD1. This bill presents a serious threat to the Works of Art Special Fund, an essential resource that has enriched the cultural and artistic landscape of Hawai‘i for decades. The bill’s lack of clarity surrounding governance and funding raises significant concerns, making it not only problematic but also misleading. I urge you to protect the integrity of the SFCA and vote NO on HB1378-HD2-SD1.

Art and Culture Are Not a Hobby or Luxury—They Are Essential

Hawai‘i’s identity is deeply rooted in its arts, culture, and history. Art is not just decoration—it is the language of our people, the keeper of our stories, and the heartbeat of our communities. It has the power to heal, unify, and empower. In times of hardship, art becomes a bridge between individuals, helping them express grief, celebrate joy, and preserve their heritage. It is through our museums, public art installations, community programs, and cultural festivals that we pass on the knowledge of our ancestors and shape a more compassionate society.

Restricting the Works of Art Special Fund would cripple the ability of artists and cultural institutions to continue this vital work. The fund does not just support artists—it supports education, community engagement, and cultural preservation. Many of our most beloved public art pieces and programs exist because of this funding, and to reduce or mismanage these resources is to undermine the very soul of Hawai‘i.

The Lack of Clarity in HB1378-HD2-SD1 Is Deeply Troubling

One of the most alarming aspects of this bill is its vague language and lack of transparency. Governance and funding are addressed ambiguously, creating room for misinterpretation, mismanagement, and even the potential dismantling of critical cultural programs. Without explicit details on how funding will be reallocated or controlled, there is a serious risk that essential art programs will be unfairly neglected or defunded entirely.

If the intent of this bill is to create a more efficient or effective distribution of resources, it has failed to provide a clear or justifiable means of achieving this. Instead, it raises more questions than answers and fosters uncertainty within the arts community. Why introduce changes that weaken a fund that has already demonstrated immense value to the people of Hawai‘i? Why strip

away support from an area that has consistently provided enrichment, education, and healing for generations?

Art Brings Us Together—HB1378 Pulls Us Apart

The beauty of the Works of Art Special Fund is that it is a public investment in our shared identity. It ensures that all people—regardless of economic status—have access to meaningful cultural experiences. It allows our children to learn through murals, performances, and educational programs. It gives our kupuna a voice through storytelling and traditional practices. It strengthens communities by fostering dialogue, creativity, and healing.

To diminish this fund is to silence voices, erase histories, and fracture communities. It sends a message that art is expendable when, in truth, it is one of the most powerful tools we have for shaping a vibrant, inclusive, and forward-moving society.

Vote NO on HB1378-HD2-SD1

For these reasons, I strongly urge you to reject HB1378-HD2-SD1. Protect the Works of Art Special Fund, support the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts (SFCA), and recognize the irreplaceable role that art plays in our communities.

Please do not allow this bill to weaken Hawai'i's cultural future. Stand with the artists, educators, and communities who rely on this support. Vote NO and preserve the legacy of art and culture for generations to come.

Aloha & mahalo for your time and consideration.

HB-1378-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/2/2025 9:48:52 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kaela Teho	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am writing in strong opposition of HB1378-HD2-SD1. This bill seeks to effectively dismantle the arts fund in Hawai'i. We were the first state to establish a dedicated fund for the arts and after seeing the immense benefit of this fund, other states have followed suit. In today's climate, connection is critical to maintain healthy individuals and statewide community. We need laws and leadership that seek to build up morale throughout our islands and invest in accessible spaces for everyone to connect. Now more than ever, it is essential that we put money, effort, and intention into ensuring art and third spaces not limited by one's financial situation are available for people to connect in. I do not come from a privileged background, and the accessibility the SFCA has provided has granted me safe spaces to breathe and evaluate what I can contribute to my community as well. These opportunities for mental rest and connection have led me to pursuing a career in landscape architecture. I want to build beautiful third spaces that encourage mental rest and reflection centered around connection to each other and our land to help others find their place in our ecosystem like the SFCA did me. The dismantling of this fund will shatter our community beyond the arts community. If this bill should pass, the effects will be felt throughout the state and beyond. I cannot overstate the positive effect the SFCA has had on my life and those I hold dear. I have brought my child to these spaces, to view the art made possible by the SFCA, to teach him the language of art and engage him in the conversation of art that began with our early ancestors. Please vote in opposition of this bill, please ensure the continuation of these spaces countless people hold dear. Please continue to uphold our morale, our ability to learn from and connect with each other. We need accessible spaces that provide respite and freedom now more than ever before. Please don't take this away from us. Voting in opposition of this bill is to vote with our community, to protect our rights, to ensure our ability to find solace in each other and to support creativity and accessibility for everyone. We need each other. We need art. We need to be able to express ourselves and to tell our stories in the ways our ancestors always have, and we deserve to have that supported. We need you to protect these spaces for us, especially with the new threats the arts face. Please vote in opposition of HB1378 HD2 SD1.

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

My name is Marguerite Ann Heart. I'm a Maui resident for 40 years. I'm an professional musician, performing Hawaiian music in the hotels by night and a Teaching Artist for the HSFCFA by day, teaching music and dance to 1000's of Maui Keiki's for 30 years. These 2 jobs comprise my sole income here on Maui. The many schools I've served over the years depend on grants from the State Foundation. Currently, I teach music and May Day dance at Makawao Elementary School. . I don't make much, but I get by. 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 and to our keiki's development. I have witnessed many children flourish within the frame-work of my program called, "Musical Teamwork", where I have children work together to create musical compositions. It teaches them the value of contributing positively to their team and to their classroom, which is a microcosm of the greater community. It helps their brains develop and increases their potential to become whole beings, operating with self-confidence and accepting the diversity of others. There is endless research on the effects that playing music has on brain development, stress relief and increasing the body's immunity. Here is just one of the many research papers by neurologist Barry Bittman, <https://www.rhythmresearchresources.net/drum-therapy-bittman.html>.

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 am begging 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. My self and my students will be devastated if this bill passes.

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

Sincerely,

Marguerite Ann Heart, Teaching Artist for the Hawaii State Foundation on Culture and the Arts

HB-1378-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/2/2025 9:51:26 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Nicholas Kaleikini	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Senators,

My name is Nicholas Kaleikini and I am a musician, teacher, entrepreneur, and most importantly a father. I am asking you to please vote NO on HB1378-HD2-SD1 regarding the Works of Art Special Fund. This source of funding is vital to our creative, cultural, and educational community. Our local community in the arts, music, culture, and education bring a significant amount of positive value to our society. We bring people together in positive and inspiring public spaces. We teach our keiki the value of art and the freedom of expression. And we invest in our local artists and cultural practitioners. Art is a vital lifeline for the stability of our community, especially our keiki. By dismantling the Works of Arts Special Fund, we are putting at risk the future of our creative community and our society as whole. This should not be hurried and more discussions need to be had. Let's find a way to come together and make this right for everyone. Clearly, the public opposes this bill, so why doesn't our voice matter?

A question for you, why is it that when there's a crisis, we rely heavily on the creative community to bring people together, whether it's through a benefit concert or simply the fact that music, culture, and the arts bring people together, yet it's always the first to be cut in regards to funding? We rely so heavily on our culture to market Hawaii to the rest of the world but we can't take care of our own.

Let's keep our current and future community healthy and vibrant through our art, creativity, dance, music, culture, education, and most importantly that five-letter magical word, aloha.

me ke aloha (with love),

Nicholas Kaleikini

HB-1378-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/2/2025 9:52:12 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kelsey Choo	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I'm writing to oppose HB1378-HD2-SD1. As an artist, I disagree with the defunding of the arts in public spaces and public programs. The lack of plan for managing funding for creative projects & programming is concerning. I have been so proud to see (& participate in) the growth and support the creative community in Hawai'i has gained in recent decades. Defunding & restricting that support would be harmful for people trying to start, grow, and continue their careers in these areas. Working as a creator can be incredibly risky, tough, and many constantly have to grapple with uncertainty in finances or support. It's worth investing in this industry that provides cultural, economic, educational, and community fulfillment. Please protect the integrity of the SFCA, and vote no on this bill.

HB-1378-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/2/2025 9:52:35 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jairus Kiyonaga	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Gracious and dedicated Hawaii Senators,

I'm writing to respectfully oppose HB1378-HD2-SD1. This bill introduces major concerns—especially the restriction of the Works of Art Special Fund and lack of clarity around governance and funding.

The Works for Arts Special Fund has been a trailblazing law that has inspired many cities across the nation to fund and grow art programs. These laws enhance the beauty of our great cities and give creatives (who are wildly underfunded opposed to other industries) a chance to make a career out of their passions, but to have a voice in their communities.

Revising this law would be detrimental to an already underfunded portion of this industry.

Please protect the integrity of the SFCA and vote NO on HB1378-HD2-SD1.

HB-1378-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/2/2025 9:56:19 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Alice Cabel Kaahanui	Testifying for Molokai Arts Center, Inc.	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Date: April 2, 2025

To: Chair Senator Donovan Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Senator Sharon Moriwaki, and Members of the Senate Ways and Means Committee

From: Alice Cabel Kaahanui, Executive Director, Molokai Arts Center

Subject: Strong Opposition to HB1378-HD2-SD1

Aloha Senator Dela Cruz, Senator Moriwaki, and Senate Ways and Means Committee Members,

My name is Alice Cabel Ka‘ahanui. I was born and raised on Molokai and have been, for the past seven years, Executive Director of the Molokai Arts Center. I am a community advocate focused on the arts, health, education, homesteading, Hawaiian and Filipino culture & history.

I strongly oppose HB1378-HD2-SD1, which threatens the future of arts and culture funding in Hawai‘i.

Art is storytelling. Funding for Arts in Hawai‘i is crucial to the wellbeing of any community. Art in its many forms ensures the history and culture of our island home and its people becomes a legacy for future generations. It is respite and lifegiving for the health of individuals of every age. Hawai‘i’s traditional arts especially must be passed on through generations. Art teaches us all to appreciate the talents of every individual. It encourages us to utilize our natural resources in a positive way, enriching the lives of those who learn art as well as view, show, and sell works of art.

“We, the Molokai Arts Center, believe that the artistic spirit is inherent in everyone, from keiki to kupuna, from novice to professional, and everyone in our Hawai‘i communities should have the opportunities to develop their creative gifts to the greatest extent possible. Artists can be the consciousness of a culture, but if we do not allowe people the opportunities to develop their creativity then we as a culture, a society, lose out on our greatest resource: human potential.”

Key Points

1. HB1378-HD2-SD1 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.

4. **Rural areas such as Molokai are most affected by unstable funding options in arts and culture.**

I urge you to individually and collectively **OPPOSE HB1378-HD2-SD1** 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.

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

Sincerely,

Alice J. Cabel Ka'ahanui, Ho'olehua, Molokai, HI

HB-1378-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/2/2025 9:58:10 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kris Grimsley	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I'm writing to respectfully oppose HB-1378. This bill introduces major concerns-especially the restriction of the works of arts special fund and lack of clarity around governance and funding. Please protect the integrity of the SFCA and vote NO on HB-1378.

The arts are so very important to us all as a community and as humans in general-expecially NOW with what is happening to our country and our current administration.

Thank you.

HB-1378-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/2/2025 10:00:11 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

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

Comments:

Aloha Chair Donovan Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Sharon Moriwaki, and Members of the Ways and Means Committee,

I am writing to respectfully oppose HB1378-HD2-SD1.

As a public programmer, performing artist, and business owner supporting over 800 local artists and creative businesses statewide through my market (Art+Flea) and retail shop (Mori), I am deeply concerned about the devastating impact this bill could have on the future of arts, culture, and education in Hawai‘i.

For the past eight years, I have worked closely with the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts (SFCA) and have witnessed firsthand the invaluable role they play in our community. SFCA supports hundreds of musicians, designers, artists, and arts organizations statewide, ensuring they have opportunities to share their work and enrich our cultural landscape.

This year, I had the privilege of co-organizing the Scholastic Art Awards student exhibition with SFCA, showcasing over 100 works by students in grades 7-12. With more than 2,000 entries, it was evident how essential the arts are to Hawai‘i’s youth. Seeing their creations displayed at Capitol Modern was life-changing for these students. Thanks to SFCA’s support, we provided an experience that empowered and inspired Hawai‘i’s keiki - and this work must continue.

HB1378-HD2-SD1 threatens the future of public art and arts education by restricting the Works of Art Special Fund. Cutting this critical funding will destabilize Hawai‘i’s arts community, diminishing programs that are pillars of our state’s creative sector (Artists-in-the-Schools, Art in Public Places, etc.) and exhibitions like the Scholastic Art Awards - all of which foster mental well-being, cultural identity, and creative expression.

I urge you to reject HB1378-HD2-SD1 and consider the long-term harm it would inflict on Hawai‘i’s arts community and economy.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.

Alyson Ishikuni

April 2, 2025

To Chair Senator Donovan M. Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Senator Sharon Y. Moriwaki, and Members of the Committee on Ways and Means,

This testimony is in **strong opposition to HB1378-HD2 SD1**, which threatens the future of arts and culture funding in Hawai'i.

As the current Executive Director 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 funding 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.

Continuing Hawai'i's only dedicated, reliable funding source for the arts is imperative and should not be replaced but federal or general funds which are never guaranteed. This bill ultimately threatens the long-term stability of arts and culture funding which therefore threatens community identity and well-being, education, tourism, and movements for justice overall as artists and cultural practitioners are essential to these areas of life.

The funding for the arts in Hawai'i is crucial to the well being of the community. I urge you to **OPPOSE HB1378-HD2 SD1** and to protect the **Works of Art Special Fund**, which has supported the arts and culture ecosystem for decades.

Mahalo for your care and consideration,

Emma Broderick

Emma Broderick

Executive Director, Pu'uhonua Society

HB-1378-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/2/2025 9:59:41 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

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

Comments:

I am a resident of the State of Hawaii and strongly oppose this bill.

Please do not approve HB1378

Mahalo

HB-1378-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/2/2025 9:53:24 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Edward Fuentes Jr	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I respectfully oppose HB1378-HD2-SD1 due to significant concerns, particularly the restrictions placed on the Works of Art Special Fund and the lack of clarity regarding governance and funding. Please protect the integrity of the SFCA by voting NO on HB1378-HD2-SD1.

HB-1378-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/2/2025 9:53:57 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

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

Comments:

I'm writing to strongly yet respectfully oppose HB1378-HD2-SD1. This bill introduces major concerns—especially the restriction of the Works of Art Special Fund and lack of clarity around governance and funding.

It is clear that this bill would deliver a devastating blow to the SFCA and all of the work they do throughout the State of Hawai'i - which spans far beyond physical artwork. This includes public art programs for keiki and people of all ages,; cultural education, celebration, and preservation; cultivating safe spaces for all people regardless of age, sex, gender, etc; driving Hawai'i's creative economy; facilitating countless draws for tourism that results in money spent throughout the State; and so much more.

Please do the right thing for the people of Hawai'i, past and present, and protect the integrity of the SFCA by voting NO on HB1378-HD2-SD1.

HB-1378-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/2/2025 10:01:34 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Deborah Ann Harada	Testifying for Loihi Arts Foundation	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-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/2/2025 10:12:47 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Angela Natrasevschi	Testifying for Ka'u High and Pahala Elementary School	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am writing to respectfully oppose HB1378-HD2-SD1. This bill raises significant concerns, particularly regarding the proposed restrictions on the Works of Art Special Fund and the lack of clarity surrounding the governance and future funding of the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts (SFCA).

The Works of Art Special Fund has long supported the enrichment of our communities, schools, and public spaces through access to the arts. Limiting this fund threatens the integrity of our state's commitment to arts and culture and undermines decades of work fostering creativity, education, and cultural preservation.

I urge you to protect the integrity of the SFCA and the invaluable role it plays in uplifting Hawai'i's communities. Please vote **NO** on HB1378-HD2-SD1.

Mahalo for your time and consideration,

Angela Natrasevschi

Secondary Art Teacher

Ka'ū High & Pāhala Elementary School

HB-1378-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/2/2025 10:07:58 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

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

Comments:

I'm writing to respectfully oppose HB1378-HD2-SD1. Public art programs' funds would be jeopardized. This bill introduces major concerns, especially the restriction of the works of art special fund and lack of clarity around governance and funding. Please protect the integrity of the SFCA and vote NO on HB1378-HD2-SD1.

HB-1378-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/2/2025 10:06:47 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Tara Iden	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I'M WRITING TO RESPECTFULLY OPPOSE HB1378-HD2-SD1. THIS BILL INTRODUCES MAJOR CONCERNS-ESPECIALLY THE RESTRICTION OF THE WORKS OF ART SPECIAL FUND AND LACK OF CLARITY AROUND GOVERNANCE AND FUNDING. PLEASE PROTECT THE INTEGRITY OF THE SFCA AND VOTE NO ON HB1378-HD2-SD1.1

Thank you,

Tara Iden Arts Educator

HB-1378-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/2/2025 10:06:17 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kristine Andrada	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am writing to respectfully oppose HB1378-HD2-SD1. This bill raises significant concerns, particularly regarding restrictions on the Works of Art Special Fund and the lack of clarity surrounding governance and funding. Please protect the integrity of the SFCA by voting no on HB1378-HD2-SD1

HB-1378-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/2/2025 10:03:53 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kelsea Armstrong	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

To Chair Delacruz and the Committee on Ways and Means:

My name is Kelsea Armstrong and I am writing testimony in strong opposition to HB1378. The severe limits proposed by this bill could eliminate essential public arts programs, there is no clear plan for how the new fund will be managed, and would be making changes at the expense of existing program.

Mahalo,

Kelsea Armstrong

HB-1378-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/2/2025 10:03:48 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Cris Lindborg	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I'm writing to respectfully oppose HB1378-HD2-SD1. This bill introduces major concerns—especially the restriction of the Works of Art Special Fund and lack of clarity around governance and funding. Please protect the integrity of the SFCA and vote NO on HB1378-HD2-SD1.

HB-1378-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/2/2025 10:24:24 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Eve Furchgott	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I'm writing to respectfully oppose HB1378-HD2-SD1. The arts programs in Hawai'i like **Artists-in-the-Schools** and **Art in Public Places** should not be cut back. Arts funding is important to our state, our keiki, kupuna & all in between - to make a healthy culture, support mental health, tourism, and the economy. This bill will make these things more difficult to sustain. Please vote NO!

HB-1378-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/2/2025 10:28:58 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Alejandra Rojas Silva	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I'm writing to respectfully oppose HB1378-HD-SD1. This bill threatens arts and arts education in Hawai'i. The bill is unclear, specially in what concerns the works of arts special fund and the governance and funding of SFCA. As an art professional and educator, the significance of SFCA is hard to understate. Please protect the integrity of SFCA and vote no on this bill. Help protect Hawai'i's arts and culture for our community and for future generations.

HB-1378-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/2/2025 10:32:02 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Michael Wilson	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Love adding performing arts. Hate moving saleried positions to the general fund.

Also interesting that the bill felt it was important to list each salary individually and also make sure it is clear there won't even be a cost of living adjustment in fiscal 27.

But more importantly, what gaurentee is given that any position will last through the budgeting process?

HB-1378-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/2/2025 10:35:11 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Brittany Nixon	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

I am writing to urge you not to oppose bill HB1378-HD2-SD1.

This bill cuts dedicated funding used for arts education by 100%, and replaces it with less than half the current budgeted amount in general funds.

I have been to many Super Saturday family events at Capitol Modern: The Hawai'i State Art Museum, and have talked to countless parents who share they are so happy to have a dedicated free museum for their children to meet professional artists, create art, and hosts family friendly events. Without the dedicated arts funding, this equitable, free event will go away, an event that is taken advantaged of by hundreds of families.

In addition, half of the Artists in the Schools granted schools do not have a dedicated arts specialist on staff. If arts education funding is cut by these extreme, some of these students will not have any specialized arts education time in their school day. Not only is this extremely inequitable, but countless studies show the relationship between arts experiences and positive mental health, stronger community relationships, and positive sense of self. This bill aims to diminish the success of Hawai'i's keiki.

Our keiki deserve more than what we are currently offering them, and by cutting these funds we are doing a disservice to them and our community.

Do not allow this bill to be passed.

Mahalo,

Brit Nixon

HB-1378-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/2/2025 10:46:33 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Naomi Santoki	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am writing to oppose HB1378-HD2-SD1. This bill raises serious concerns, particularly regarding the limitations placed on the Works of Art Special Fund and the unclear governance and funding structures. This bill threatens to limit public art and arts education. Please protect the integrity of the SFCA and vote NO on HB1378-HD2-SD1.

HB-1378-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/2/2025 10:54:47 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Angel Prince	Testifying for Prince Dance Company	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

“I’m writing to respectfully oppose HB1378-HD2-SD1. This bill introduces major concerns—especially the restriction of the Works of Art Special Fund and lack of clarity around governance and funding.

Our non-profit dance company on the Big Island trains and supports teaching artists who bring art into the public and charter schools here on the island. We bring dance and art to over 1000 students a year who otherwise would have no exposure to art. Studies show again and again that access and participation in art have lasting mental and physical impact on a person's wellbeing.

If this bill passes all the students who benefit from the Works of Special Arts fund and working teaching artists who provide this important service to the community will lose.

Please protect the integrity of the SFCA and vote NO on HB1378-HD2-SD1.

HB-1378-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/2/2025 10:55:51 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Vicky Robbins	Testifying for Hawaii Arts Alliance	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

I am writing to urge you to oppose bill HB1378-HD2-SD1.

This bill cuts dedicated funding used for arts education by 100%, and replaces it with less than half the current budgeted amount in general funds.

Half of the Artists in the Schools granted schools do not have a dedicated arts specialist on staff. If arts education funding is cut by these extreme, some of these students will not have any specialized arts education time in their school day. Not only is this extremely inequitable, but countless studies show the relationship between arts experiences and positive mental health, stronger community relationships, and a positive sense of self. This bill aims to diminish the success of Hawai'i's keiki.

Our keiki deserve more than what we are currently offering them, and by cutting these funds, we are doing a disservice to them and our community.

Do not allow this bill to be passed.

Mahalo,

Vicmy Robbins

HB-1378-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/2/2025 11:06:19 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Andrea Pro	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

“I’m writing to respectfully oppose HB1378-HD2-SD1. This bill introduces major concerns—especially the restriction of the Works of Art Special Fund and lack of clarity around governance and funding. Please protect the integrity of the SFCA and vote NO on HB1378-HD2-SD1.”

I am an established artist living in Kona for the past 30 years.

HB-1378-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/2/2025 11:07:47 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Rena Lee	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I'm writing to respectfully oppose HB1378-HD2-SD1. This bill introduces major concerns- especially the restriction of the works of art special fund and lack of clarity around governance and funding. Please protect the integrity of SFCA and vote no on HB1378-HD2-SD1.

HB-1378-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/2/2025 11:11:25 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Nicholas Gianforti	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I'm writing to respectfully oppose HB1378-HD2-SD1. This bill introduces major concerns—especially the restriction of the Works of Art Special Fund and lack of clarity around governance and funding. Please protect the integrity of the SFCA and vote NO on HB1378-HD2-SD1.

HB-1378-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/2/2025 11:22:51 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Deborah Renee Bertollette	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I'm writing to respectfully oppose HB1378-HD2-SD1. This bill introduces major concerns—especially the restriction of the Works of Art Special Fund and lack of clarity around governance and funding. Please protect the integrity of the SFCA and vote NO on HB1378-HD2-SD1.

Thank you,

Deborah Renee Bertollette

HB-1378-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/2/2025 11:25:12 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kaiani Kiaha	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I'm writing to respectfully **oppose** HB1378-HD2-SD1. This bill introduces major concerns—especially the restriction of the Works of Art Special Fund and the lack of clarity around governance and funding. Please protect the integrity of the SFCA and vote NO on HB1378-HD2-SD1.

HB-1378-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/2/2025 11:27:55 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Johannette Rowley	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I'm writing to respectfully oppose HB1378-HD2-SD1. This bill introduces major concerns—especially the restriction of the Works of Art Special Fund and lack of clarity around governance and funding. Please protect the integrity of the SFCA and vote NO on HB1378-HD2-SD1.

HB-1378-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/2/2025 11:32:56 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Katharena Rentumis	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Date: 4/5/2025

From: Katharena Rentumis

Affiliation (if applicable): Community Member

Subject: Strong Opposition to HB1378 HD2

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

My name is Katharena, and I am an artist and program manager at a local nonprofit in Honolulu. I'm also a previous employee of SFCA and have worked firsthand with the Art in Public Places collection and in the Museum. I've seen the impact of the APP collection in our local community as well as how the program supports local artists and the creative economy in addition to providing enriching cultural experiences for children, families, locals, and tourists alike. The Capitol Modern is a museum like no other, it provides free access to arts & cultural experiences to our community. Can you think of any other museum that provides a free experience on our islands? This is something so crucial, and it needs to be protected. I am submitting testimony in strong opposition to HB1378 HD2, which threatens the future of arts and culture funding in Hawai'i. Although increasing support for performing arts seems like a wonderful idea, it seems to come at a cost to the Art in Public Places program and remains unclear how the museum, APP collection, arts education programming, SFCA staff, local artists, and our community would be affected by this bill. Therefore, I stand in opposition.

In my work, I've witnessed firsthand one keiki's first trip to the museum on a school field trip (funded through SFCA programs) and the joy, wonder, curiosity, and dialogues that came out of their visit.

Often overlooked is how art can be utilized to inform and teach valuable life skills such as communication, teamwork, respect for other cultures and people, inquiry, and observation as well as a tool in teaching other classroom subjects. I urge you in this tumultuous time in our country to lead by example and protect our local arts & culture. Mahalo nui loa for your time and consideration.

HB-1378-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/2/2025 11:36:26 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
ChetYeng Loong	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

I am writing to urge you to oppose bill HB1378-HD2-SD1.

This bill cuts dedicated funding used for arts education by 100%, and replaces it with less than half the current budgeted amount in general funds.

Half of the Artists in the Schools granted schools do not have a dedicated arts specialist on staff. If arts education funding is cut by these extreme, some of these students will not have any specialized arts education time in their school day. Not only is this extremely inequitable, but countless studies show the relationship between arts experiences and positive mental health, stronger community relationships, and a positive sense of self. This bill aims to diminish the success of Hawai'i's keiki.

Our keiki deserve more than what we are currently offering them, and by cutting these funds, we are doing a disservice to them and our community.

Do not allow this bill to be passed.

Aloha,

Chet-Yeng Loong

HB-1378-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/2/2025 11:45:53 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kim Barclift	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

I am writing to urge you to oppose bill HB1378-HD2-SD1.

This bill cuts dedicated funding used for arts education by 100%, and replaces it with less than half the current budgeted amount in general funds.

Half of the Artists in the Schools granted schools do not have a dedicated arts specialist on staff. If arts education funding is cut by these extreme, some of these students will not have any specialized arts education time in their school day. Not only is this extremely inequitable, but countless studies show the relationship between arts experiences and positive mental health, stronger community relationships, and a positive sense of self. This bill aims to diminish the success of Hawai'i's keiki.

Our keiki deserve more than what we are currently offering them, and by cutting these funds, we are doing a disservice to them and our community.

Do not allow this bill to be passed.

Mahalo,

HB-1378-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/2/2025 11:46:39 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Vincent Sims	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Music education is invaluable. Especially in Hawaii, it is a way to educate our future generations about the incredible culture of our past.

HB-1378-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/2/2025 11:47:36 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Monique Lockett	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I oppose the bill.

HB-1378-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/2/2025 11:47:43 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Ferniel Tiamzon	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Half of the Artists in the Schools granted schools do not have a dedicated arts specialist on staff. If arts education funding is cut by these extreme, some of these students will not have any specialized arts education time in their school day. Not only is this extremely inequitable, but countless studies show the relationship between arts experiences and positive mental health, stronger community relationships, and a positive sense of self. This bill aims to diminish the success of Hawai'i's keiki.

Our keiki deserve more than what we are currently offering them, and by cutting these funds, we are doing a disservice to them and our community.

Do not allow this bill to be passed.

HB-1378-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/2/2025 11:49:58 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Caleb Esperanza	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I've devoted my life to teaching and spreading the magic of music, having formerly aspired to teach music bands. Without the arts programs that helped shape me, I wouldn't be where I am now. Less performances and cancelled classes aren't the only consequences of halving arts funding. Students will miss out on opportunities to learn about themselves as a result. Beyond merely teaching notes and rhythms, the arts also foster self-expression, perseverance, teamwork, and emotional intelligence. Many students find that the arts are their passion, their safe haven, and the reason they continue their education, particularly those who don't relate to traditional academics. We cannot afford to treat the arts as an afterthought if we want pupils who are well-rounded, intelligent, and creative.

HB-1378-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/2/2025 11:57:34 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
yutaka kawahito	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly oppose to dismantle the long-term stability of arts and culture funding of the Works of Art Special Fund—Hawai‘i’s only dedicated, reliable funding source for the arts.

HB-1378-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/2/2025 11:57:41 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Anthony Tran	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am writing to urge you to oppose bill HB1378-HD2-SD1.

This bill cuts dedicated funding used for arts education by 100%, and replaces it with less than half the current budgeted amount in general funds.

Half of the Artists in the Schools granted schools do not have a dedicated arts specialist on staff. If arts education funding is cut by these extreme, some of these students will not have any specialized arts education time in their school day. Not only is this extremely inequitable, but countless studies show the relationship between arts experiences and positive mental health, stronger community relationships, and a positive sense of self. This bill aims to diminish the success of Hawai'i's keiki.

Our keiki deserve more than what we are currently offering them, and by cutting these funds, we are doing a disservice to them and our community.

Do not allow this bill to be passed.

HB-1378-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/2/2025 11:59:10 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Lucas Toor	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

I am writing to strongly urge you to oppose bill HB1378-HD2-SD1.

This bill proposes a 100% cut to the dedicated funding for arts education, replacing it with less than half of the current budget through general funds.

Many of the schools that receive Artists in the Schools grants lack a dedicated arts specialist on staff. If arts education funding is severely reduced, some students may lose access to any specialized arts education during their school day. This is not only deeply inequitable, but it also disregards the well-documented benefits of arts experiences—such as improved mental health, stronger community bonds, and a positive sense of self. This bill threatens to undermine the well-being and success of Hawai'i's keiki.

Music and arts education in school had a profound impact on my personal growth and development. Growing up, I was fortunate to be exposed to a variety of artistic disciplines that allowed me to express myself in ways that I otherwise might not have been able to. Music, in particular, became a transformative force in my life. Through it, I discovered not only a love for sound and rhythm but also a deeper sense of who I am and what I can accomplish.

In school, music and the arts provided me with an outlet to explore my emotions and connect with others on a meaningful level. Whether it was participating in a school band, choir, or orchestra, I learned how to communicate my thoughts and feelings through creativity. It allowed me to process emotions like joy, frustration, and sadness in a constructive way, giving me a sense of balance and emotional clarity that I hadn't experienced elsewhere.

Arts education also helped me build important life skills—discipline, teamwork, time management, and confidence. Through rehearsals, performances, and group projects, I learned the value of hard work and collaboration. I discovered that success isn't just about individual achievement, but about how well you can work with others to create something greater than yourself. Music, in particular, taught me patience, as I learned that mastering an instrument or a piece of music takes time, persistence, and a willingness to grow.

Beyond the technical skills I gained, music and arts education gave me the confidence to express myself fully and authentically. They opened my eyes to the beauty of diversity and the power of

creativity in all aspects of life. The arts nurtured my imagination and taught me to think critically and innovate, skills that I carry with me today.

Looking back, I realize that the arts were not just an extracurricular activity; they were a vital part of my education and personal development. They shaped my character, influenced my worldview, and gave me tools to navigate the challenges of life. Music and the arts are not just about creativity—they are a key to understanding oneself and the world around us. I am incredibly grateful for the opportunities I had to engage in arts education, as it truly made me who I am today.

Our children deserve more than what is currently being offered, and by cutting these essential funds, we are doing a disservice to them and to our community.

Please do not allow this bill to pass.

Mahalo

HB-1378-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/2/2025 12:03:03 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Eugene Kim	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Music and the arts are a vital part of my life, and it continues to be so. I've been supported by musicians my whole life, so if this bill were to be passed, then we would see the fall of years worth of efforts of advocacy to bring proper music education to the Hawaiian Islands. Music is an important part of several cultures here on O'ahu. Music education isn't just about learning music, it's also about developing a child's mind and behavior into a positive outlook. Music can be seen like a sport, in the sense that it builds character, team-building skills, leadership skills, and life skills that aren't strictly specific to the sport. Music applies these qualities on a regular basis, with ensembles requiring different people to work together towards a similar goal, which also builds responsibility, making sure you get your part down to help the whole ensemble, and being disciplined, with rehearsal etiquette that is taught in order to have a smooth efficient rehearsal. All of these are life lessons being taught in the context of a musical standpoint. This bill threatens to take away these opportunities for the children and future generations of both musical and mental and emotional development of children.

April 2, 2025

To: Hawai'i State Legislature

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

RE: Opposition to HB 1378 HD2 SD1

This testimony is to express my strong objection to HB 1378 HD2 SD1. I have been an art professor at University of Hawai'i at Mānoa since 1992, and am also appointed Interim Director of the John Young Museum, The Art Gallery, and the Commons Gallery at UHM from 8/23-8/85. As an educator and Interim 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 artist, 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 32 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-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/2/2025 12:28:57 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

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

Comments:

Aloha,

I am writing to strongly **oppose HB1378-HD2-SD1**. This bill dismantles essential funding structures for arts and culture programs in Hawai'i, especially in a time when so much arts funding is getting cut on a federal level.

I am an artist and the SFCA provides many needed and elsewhere scarce opportunities for artists in our state. Art is a vital part of a healthy community and economy.

By cutting dedicated funding and offering no viable alternative, this measure puts at risk the very programs that serve our keiki, working artists, and communities statewide.

The **Works of Art Special Fund** has been a national model. Restricting the fund and removing its personnel support function weakens the entire system.

Please protect the SFCA's ability to serve Hawai'i through the arts. Vote NO on HB1378-HD2-SD1.

Mahalo,

Margo Ray

HB-1378-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/2/2025 12:31:06 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Mericia Palma Elmore	Testifying for SAG-AFTRA Hawai'i Local	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

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 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, Executive Director SAG-AFTRA Hawaii Local

HB-1378-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/2/2025 12:31:47 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

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

Comments:

I'M WRITING TO RESPECTFULLY OPPOSE HB1378-HD2-SD1. THIS BILL INTRODUCES MAJOR CONCERNS-ESPECIALLY THE RESTRICTION OF THE WORKS OF ART SPECIAL FUND AND LACK OF CLARITY AROUND GOVERNANCE AND FUNDING. PLEASE PROTECT THE INTEGRITY OF THE SFCA AND VOTE NO ON HB1378-HD2-SD1.

-Jennifer Eng

HB-1378-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/2/2025 12:35:03 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Sora Yoon	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Members of the Ways and Means Committee,

I strongly oppose HB1378-HD2-SD1, which drastically reduces dedicated arts education funding. This bill eliminates 100% of the current designated funding and replaces it with less than half the original amount in general funds. Such a reduction will have devastating consequences for Hawaii's students.

Many schools rely on the Artists in the Schools program because they do not have a dedicated arts specialist on staff. If this funding is cut, thousands of students will lose their only access to specialized arts education. This is not only inequitable but also harmful to student development. Research consistently shows that arts education fosters creativity, strengthens community connections, and supports students' mental health and sense of identity.

By cutting these essential funds, we are failing our keiki and undermining the cultural and creative future of Hawaii. Our students deserve more opportunities, not fewer. I urge you to reject HB1378-HD2-SD1 and preserve the necessary funding for arts education.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.

Sora Yoon

HB-1378-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/2/2025 12:45:03 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Richard S Velasquez	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please do NOT support this Bill, this bill does not provide stable and secure funding for important efforts for our community

Senator Donovan Dela Cruz, Chair & Members of Ways & Means,

First, may I thank you for serving your constituents of the State of Hawaii. Your task is not a simple one and I respect the integrity you each bring to this decision making.

In the recent past I had the privilege to serve on the volunteer advisory board of the Hawaii State Foundation on Culture & the Arts (HSFCA) for eight (8) years, one of them as Chair of that body. The other 7 years I chaired the Grants sub-committee. This gave me a tremendous education in the way the State of Hawaii manages the funds entrusted to them through the citizens tax dollars and fees paid for services.

The difference between how the HSFCA and almost all other state agencies operates is unique. The fiduciary they embrace the funds provided by the 1% law is laudable. Not only do they have to acquire art but they have to preserve the art, make the art accessible to as much of the citizenry as possible. This includes but is not limited to educating, informing and enabling that audience.

I am writing to strongly **oppose HB1378-HD2-SD1**. This bill dismantles essential funding structures for arts and culture programs in Hawai'i.

Instead of cutting dedicated funding, offering no viable alternative, putting at risk numerous programs that have a proven track record from the keiki to the Kapuna the Legislature should be asking the HSFCA to provide guidance in how more state agencies and programs can operate with the same integrity and responsibility for the funds allocated to them.

I mean no disrespect in this message but the respect that you have the power to make a difference by being bold! Do it! Stop this measure from moving any further. Allow the dedicated HSFCA to continue to do their jobs and enhance the culture and arts opportunities in Hawaii unwounded by this measure. **Please Vote NO on HB1378-HD2-SD1.**

With sincere Aloha, Mary Begier

LATE

HB-1378-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/2/2025 12:56:26 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kathy Chang	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I **OPPOSE** this bill. It is unfair. Let's be pono.

LATE

HB-1378-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/2/2025 12:59:33 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Krista Graves	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I do not support Bill HB1378-HD2-SD1. This bill threatens to strip our children of the vital arts education they need to grow, thrive, and succeed.

The funding provided by the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts (SFCA) is often the *only* arts education many of our keiki receive. As someone involved with an organization that has been providing performing arts education in Hawaii’s public schools for 15 years, I’ve witnessed firsthand the profound impact these programs have on our children, their futures, and our community.

If HB1378-HD2-SD1 passes, the SFCA would be forced to reduce its support for teaching artists from 130 schools to fewer than 60. For our organization, Prince Dance Company, this would mean eliminating dance classes for 1000 keiki—children who have little to no access to the arts. We are already serving five schools with the Artists in the Schools program (AITS) and have plans to expand to nine schools next year. Cutting this funding would devastate our efforts and deny these children the opportunity to experience the transformative power of the arts.

Please, do not take away their future.

Sincerely,
Krista Graves
A concerned parent and community member
Honoka'a, HI

LATE

HB-1378-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/2/2025 12:59:36 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Anika Kuntze	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I oppose this Bill. The arts, institutions and artist deserve reliable funding!

LATE

HB-1378-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/2/2025 1:00:00 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Raina Racki	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I'm writing to respectfully oppose HB1378-HD2-SD1.

This bill introduces major concerns—especially the restriction of the Works of Art Special Fund and lack of clarity around governance and funding.

Please protect the integrity of the SFCA and vote NO on HB1378-HD2-SD1.

HB-1378-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/2/2025 1:04:25 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Michelle Schwengel	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Moriwaki and members of the Ways & Means Committee,

My name is Michelle Schwengel and I am an interdisciplinary artist and informal educator living in central O‘ahu. I am submitting testimony in strong opposition to HB1378-HD2 SD1 which threatens the future of arts and culture funding in Hawai‘i.

For two decades I have been an active member of the local art community. At the beginning of that time I was very impressed to learn how the state of Hawai‘i was so forward-thinking by legislating support for local arts through the 1% program. That it set a national and sustainable precedent for such allocations was something to be proud of! However recent efforts by Representatives Yamashita and Lee to shift and diminish this structure is extremely disappointing. Shame on those two for disguising these cuts in the deceptive wording of this bill! In a time when federal support for the arts is being slashed, do the right thing and keep this positive arrangement and allocation in place.

My art practice is aligned with my training and experience as a scientist. Bringing concepts from the natural world into my works’ forms, imagery, and storytelling upholds my mission as a science communicator. I have humbly received support from the 1% special fund through the acquisition of three of my works. Each of the works have subsequently been displayed publicly: two are currently on view in a library and at a university, which I see as perfect alignment with the intention behind my works. These pieces document natural history of ocean surrounding our archipelago. They invite curiosity and inquiry about how marine systems are studied and protected. Please continue to support these types of engaging public offerings in our local spaces.

Mahalo for the opportunity to submit testimony. I appreciate your commitment to supporting Hawai‘i’s arts and culture sector. I trust you will OPPOSE HB1378-HD2-SD1 and protect the Works of Art Special Fund.

Sincerely,

Michelle Schwengel

Science-oriented artist and informal educator

HB-1378-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/2/2025 1:05:25 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jacquelyn Chappel	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am writing in opposition to HB 1378 which destabilize funding for the arts in favor of relying on federal funds, general funds, and grants.

Now is not the time for the state to rely on federal funding!! And once these programs are defunded, they will be difficult to rebuild.

As Hawaii seeks to diversify its economy, one important source of tax revenue is in the entertainment industry which films many popular TV series and movies right here in Hawaii. Jurassic Park famously was filmed in Hawaii as was the latest Hawaii 5.0, Lost, White Lotus, and much more. The Hawaii Film Office has been working tirelessly for decades to bring these projects in to Hawaii and Hawaii has a thriving entertainment industry which has even fed into the tourism industry. These projects require actors, lighting technicians, sound engineers, and more. And many of these individuals are hired from the local community!!

Arts are an important part of the economic life here in Hawaii. It's important that we continue to grow and build the talent base and knowledge in this field here in Hawaii. For this reason, I ask that you REJECT HB 1378 in favor of continued funding to the arts. Mahalo!

HB-1378-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/2/2025 1:05:04 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Chere Costales	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

I am writing to urge you to oppose bill HB1378-HD2-SD1.

This bill cuts dedicated funding used for arts education by 100%, and replaces it with less than half the current budgeted amount in general funds.

Half of the Artists in the Schools granted schools do not have a dedicated arts specialist on staff. If arts education funding is cut by this extreme, some of these students will not have any specialized arts education time in their school day. Not only is this extremely inequitable, but countless studies show the relationship between arts experiences and positive mental health, stronger community relationships, and a positive sense of self. This bill aims to diminish the success of Hawai'i's keiki.

Our keiki deserve more than what we are currently offering them, and by cutting these funds, we are doing a disservice to them and our community.

Do not allow this bill to be passed.

Mahalo,

Chéré Costales

LATE

HB-1378-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/2/2025 1:13:27 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

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

Comments:

Good afternoon,

I am writing to urge you to oppose bill HB1378-HD2-SD1.

This bill cuts dedicated funding used for arts education by 100%, and replaces it with less than half the current budgeted amount in general funds.

Half of the Artists in the Schools granted schools do not have a dedicated arts specialist on staff. If arts education funding is cut by these extreme, some of these students will not have any specialized arts education time in their school day. Not only is this extremely inequitable, but countless studies show the relationship between arts experiences and positive mental health, stronger community relationships, and a positive sense of self. This bill aims to diminish the success of Hawai'i's keiki.

In addition, this funding has been supporting immersive art experiences for neurodivergent young people over the past three years. These experiences are designed and created specifically for students who most of the time have never been on a field trip before because of their high needs. By cutting this funding, you would be cutting the opportunity to develop artistic experiences for Hawai'i's most vulnerable population.

Our keiki deserve more than what we are currently offering them, and by cutting these funds, we are doing a disservice to them and our community.

Do not allow this bill to be passed.

Thank you for your time,

Tamara

LATE

HB-1378-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/2/2025 1:13:35 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Michael Lerner	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I'll keep this short. I oppose HB 1378. It jeopardizes vital arts programs in Hawai'i.
Michael Lerner, Haleiwa

LATE

HB-1378-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/2/2025 1:20:24 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kurt GInoza	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

I am writing to urge you to oppose bill HB1378-HD2-SD1.

This bill cuts dedicated funding used for arts education by 100%, and replaces it with less than half the current budgeted amount in general funds.

Half of the Artists in the Schools granted schools do not have a dedicated arts specialist on staff. If arts education funding is cut by these extreme, some of these students will not have any specialized arts education time in their school day. Not only is this extremely inequitable, but countless studies show the relationship between arts experiences and positive mental health, stronger community relationships, and a positive sense of self. This bill aims to diminish the success of Hawai'i's keiki. Not every child's family has the means to visit these artists in their professional settings, especially music performances. As a music teacher, we're the next step in-between a professional performing artist in their eyes. Not all of us are professional performers but we share what experiences we had performing growing up through our music education or performing gigs. That said, it is not a requirement for a music teacher to have been a professional performer so having a means to have artists to come in to educate our students is beneficial for them, their future, and their social emotional learning experiences.

Our keiki deserve more than what we are currently offering them, and by cutting these funds, we are doing a disservice to them and our community.

Do not allow this bill to be passed.

Mahalo,

Kurt K. Ginoza

LATE

HB-1378-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/2/2025 1:21:34 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Robert "Kealoha" Domingo	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Committee Chair Dela Cruz and esteemed WAM Committee Members,

I am writing in opposition to HB1378-HD2-SD1 in it's current form. I am deeply concerned that placing limits on the Works Of Art Special Fund could put the State Foundation on Culture and Arts at major risk for loss of funding subsequently the reduction or even demise of the valuable positive community impacts which the work of the SFCA does. Over the past year, I have found myself growing continually closer and appreciative of the circle of support that the SFCA has created.

At Capitol Modern, I feel embraced by a network of creative minds and cannot express the feeling of gratitude I have, warmly welcomed into an ‘ohana that opens a sometimes untouched part of my mind and spirit. I have come to be a true believer and supporter of the pu‘uhonua which has been deemed "The People's Museum".

I am also confident when I say that my voice is also echoed and my mana‘o is confirmed by the tens of thousands of community members who have enjoyed the space called Capitol Modern. Whether artists, art lovers, performers, cultural practitioners, school children, vendors, attendee of one of the extremely popular First and Third Friday events, the many Pacifica cousins and kānaka Hawai‘i who came during the landmark Festival of Pacific Arts, and now the Hawai‘i Triennial 2025, so many community members would be adversely effected by a potential decline or loss in SFCA funding.

I am humbly asking you WAM Committee members to please consider an option which does not leave the SFCA vulnerable to funding, staff, resource & service loss, and until such an action plan is developed, please **Do NOT pass HB1378-HD2-SD1.**

Me ka ha‘a ha‘a,

R. Kealoha Domingo

(808)753-3132

LATE

HB-1378-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/2/2025 1:32:09 PM
Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jana Ireijo	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

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

Aloha mai kākou –

As an artist and arts educator, I’m writing in strong opposition to HB1378-HD2. This bill threatens the future of arts and culture funding in Hawai‘i by restricting the Works of Art Special Fund—our only consistent, statewide source of public support for the arts.

General funds are not a reliable replacement. With so many competing needs, arts and culture will be left behind. The creative sector is essential to our identity, our economy, and the well-being of our keiki and communities.

Please oppose HB1378-HD2 and protect the dedicated funding that has sustained Hawai‘i’s vibrant arts and culture for decades.

Mahalo nui,
Jana Ireijo

LATE

HB-1378-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/2/2025 1:42:04 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Lisa Asagi	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I'm a business owner and resident of Honolulu. I am in opposition of this bill.

LATE

HB-1378-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/2/2025 2:02:50 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Cedric Clinton Caires	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I'M WRITING TO RESPECTFULLY OPPOSE HB1378-HD2-SD1. THIS BILL INTRODUCES MAJOR CONCERNS-ESPECIALLY THE RESTRICTION OF THE WORKS OF ART SPECIAL FUND AND LACK OF CLARITY AROUND GOVERNANCE AND FUNDING. PLEASE PROTECT THE INTEGRITY OF THE SFCA AND VOTE NO ON HB1378-HD2-SD1.

LATE

HB-1378-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/2/2025 1:58:30 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Stephanie Chang	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

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

I am a communications consultant and graphic designer who serves Hawai'i organizations devoted to sustainability and community. Returning home to Hawai'i from NYC in 2001, i was grateful to a thriving art community that nurtured me and my talents. Hawai'i's art community is what kept me home, and convinced me to stay home. I am submitting testimony in strong **OPPOSITION** to HB1378-HD2, which threatens the future of arts and culture funding in Hawai'i.

Investment in the arts is a sign of a strong economy and thriving society. Artists, art practitioners, and art educators are a valuable voice of authenticity in our communities, and make it safe for others to cultivate their voice and unique perspective. In this time of federal cuts and uncertainty, it is essential to keep funding for the arts alive.

I **OPPOSE** HB1378-HD2 and 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,
Stephanie Chang

HB-1378-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/2/2025 2:06:33 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
RHANDA VICKERY	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

April 2, 2025

Aloha,

I am writing to strongly oppose HB1378-HD2-SD1. This bill dismantles essential funding structures for arts and culture programs in Hawai'i.

For the past ten years, I have had the privilege of welcoming a teaching artist into my school, and I have seen firsthand the incredible impact of the arts on students. Year after year, I watch as creativity flourishes, confidence grows, and students discover new ways to express themselves. The arts foster critical thinking, collaboration, and emotional growth—skills that extend far beyond the classroom.

This long-standing partnership has shown me that the arts are an essential part of education. They bring joy, inspire innovation, and empower students in ways traditional lessons sometimes cannot. I will always support the arts because I have seen their transformative power and know how much they matter.

By cutting dedicated funding and offering no viable alternative, this measure puts at risk the very programs that serve our keiki, working artists, and communities statewide.

The Works of Art Special Fund has been a national model. Restricting the fund and removing its personnel support function weakens the entire system.

Please protect the SFCA's ability to serve Hawai'i through the arts. Vote NO on HB1378-HD2-SD1.

Mahalo,

Ku'ulei Vickery

Waikoloa Elementary and Middle School

808-313-5797

rhanda.vickery@k12.hi.us

LATE

Committee on Ways and Means
The Hawaii State Senate
415 S Beretania St.
Honolulu, HI 96813

Re: OPPOSITION to Bill [HB1378](#)

April 2, 2025

Dear Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Moriwaki, and esteemed members of the Committee on Ways and Means,

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 SD1](#) includes some positive provisions, it ***ultimately threatens the long-term stability of arts and culture funding*** by dismantling the Works of Art Special Fund—Hawaii's only dedicated, reliable funding source for the arts. This fund has ensured that Hawaii's arts sector remains resilient, even during economic downturns. It takes away the 1% allocation of funding from new construction projects, making the amount flexible over time and thus vulnerable to political and economic conditions. 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.

Any 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

LATE

HB-1378-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/2/2025 2:22:52 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Janice Boychuk	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

I am reaching out to express my strong opposition to bill HB1378-HD2-SD1.

This proposed legislation eliminates 100% of the dedicated funding for arts education, replacing it with less than half of the current amount from general funds.

Many of the schools benefiting from the Artists in the Schools grants lack a dedicated arts specialist on staff. If these drastic funding cuts are implemented, some students will no longer have access to specialized arts education. This is not only an unfair situation, but it also ignores the proven benefits of arts experiences, including improved mental health, stronger community connections, and enhanced self-esteem. By undermining arts education, this bill risks hindering the success and well-being of Hawai'i's keiki.

Our children deserve more than the current offerings. Cutting these funds would be a disservice to them and our community.

Please do not allow this bill to pass.

LATE

HB-1378-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/2/2025 2:27:51 PM
Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jodi Endicott	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

“I’m writing to respectfully oppose HB1378-HD2-SD1. This bill introduces major concerns—especially the restriction of the Works of Art Special Fund and lack of clarity around governance and funding. Please protect the integrity of the SFCA and vote NO on HB1378-HD2-SD1.”

It is time to take an integrated approach to our problems by collaborating with the artists and art organizations of Hawaii. Rather than making such drastic cuts to funding of the arts, use those fund the arts to be part of the solution to address issues of our time now. Art to educate and assist with housing, mental health and illness and homelessness. Art to address financial literacy and career development of our youth so they stay and stop this brain drain. Art to address climate change so tourists and residents find solutions together

Please think differently and creatively for effective solutions to our problems.

Thank you

Jodi Endicott

Idea maven and visual connector to empower effective change. Let's meet at the Bishop Street What's Next bus stop guy to come up with solutions Let's work together

utilize this same funding to have artists create publicly installed issues that are so critical to this time.

LATE

HB-1378-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/2/2025 2:29:57 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Michele	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly oppose HB1378_SD1 because it undermines the stability of funding for the arts in Hawai'i. While the bill is framed as supporting the arts, it actually makes the State Foundation on Culture & Arts (SFCA) dependent on unpredictable funding sources, such as federal grants and general funds, rather than maintaining the consistent 1% allocation from new state construction projects. This change would subject arts funding to shifting political and economic conditions, jeopardizing long-term investment in Hawai'i's cultural and artistic heritage. The existing law, established through Act 298 (1967) and Act 389 (1989), has ensured a steady and reliable commitment to the arts for decades. HB1378_SD1 would dismantle this framework, putting the future of arts funding at risk. I urge lawmakers to uphold the current 1% allocation and reject this bill.

LATE

HB-1378-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/2/2025 2:37:13 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Karen Kiefer	Individual	Comments	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please support as much funding for arts education as possible. Music, visual art, theatre, dance, help students connect their hearts and minds and bodies in a way that makes th emost intelligent citizens. It is not decorative, the arts are at the heart of who we are.Thank you for your consideraiton. Karen Kiefer

LATE

HB-1378-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/2/2025 2:57:00 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Diane Ware	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dear Chairman and Committee Members,

My name is Diane Ware and I urge you to **OPPOSE HB1378-HD2-SD1**, as it would **devastate arts funding** and **dismantle a long-standing commitment** *to cultural and economic sustainability in Hawai'i*. Also, there is no clear path to proper funding allocations in writing from other sources.

This bill introduces major concerns—especially the restriction of the Works of Art Special Fund and the lack of clarity around governance and funding. Please protect the integrity of the SFCA and vote NO on HB1378-HD2-SD1.

Sincerely sent from Volcano Ka'u Moku

LATE

HB-1378-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/2/2025 2:59:38 PM
Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Nicole Huffman-Rothbell	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

I am writing to urge you to oppose bill HB1378-HD2-SD1.

This bill cuts dedicated funding used for arts education by 100%, and replaces it with less than half the current budgeted amount in general funds.

Half of the Artists in the Schools granted schools do not have a dedicated arts specialist on staff. If arts education funding is cut by these extreme, some of these students will not have any specialized arts education time in their school day. Not only is this extremely inequitable, but countless studies show the relationship between arts experiences and positive mental health, stronger community relationships, and a positive sense of self. This bill aims to diminish the success of Hawai'i's keiki.

As a music educator, I have seen my students in Nanakuli be able to find a deeper connection to their culture and sense of self, because the arts help preserve and share culture experiences.

Our keiki deserve more than what we are currently offering them, and by cutting these funds, we are doing a disservice to them and our community.

Do not allow this bill to be passed.

Mahalo,

Nicole Huffman

LATE

HB-1378-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/2/2025 3:00:55 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Wynn Kiyama	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

I am writing to strongly **oppose HB1378-HD2-SD1**. This bill dismantles essential funding structures for arts and culture programs in Hawai'i.

I take classes in Japanese taiko and Okinawan classical dance, and participate as a dancer at numerous summer Obon festivals. My partner takes hula classes and together we attend many concerts and recitals. The arts enriches our lives and leads to a greater appreciation of varied cultural traditions, creative artists, and culture bearers.

By cutting dedicated funding and offering no viable alternative, this measure puts at risk the very programs that serve our keiki, working artists, and communities statewide.

The **Works of Art Special Fund** has been a national model. Restricting the fund and removing its personnel support function weakens the entire system.

Please protect the SFCA's ability to serve Hawai'i through the arts. Vote NO on HB1378-HD2-SD1.

Mahalo,

Wynn Kiyama

LATE

HB-1378-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/2/2025 3:07:04 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Keith Merritt	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am writing to oppose HB1378 HD2 SD1. As a local actor working both in front of and behind the camera, I feel this bill would have a major, negative impact on local artists, which I believe are a vital part of our community. Please vote no on HB1378 HD2 SD1

HB-1378-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/2/2025 3:56:50 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Emily Leucht	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha mai,

I'm writing to respectfully oppose HB1378-HD2-SD1. This bill introduces major concerns—especially the restriction of the Works of Art Special Fund and lack of clarity around governance and funding. The SFCA supports community art programs and artists across Hawai'i and without secured funding, these arts programs will be threatened. Here in Hilo, through the financial support of the SFCA, I have seen arts organizations inspire and uplift our community by providing quality programming in the arts. Please protect the integrity of the SFCA and vote NO on HB1378-HD2-SD1.

me ke ha'aha'a,

Emily Leucht

HB-1378-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/2/2025 3:57:58 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Christine (Danielson) Walters	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

The Arts are the Heart of Hawai'i. The Arts are what set us apart in the world and represents our unique local culture. Without the Arts, we not only fail to embody our local culture: we fail future generations of Hawai'i nei.

Please oppose this bill, which seeks to endanger the Arts in Hawai'i.

Mahalo for your action.

HB-1378-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/2/2025 4:08:19 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Cathy Cunningham-Little	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I'm writing to respectfully oppose HB1378-HD2-SD1. This bill introduces major concerns—especially the restriction of the Works of Art Special Fund and the lack of clarity around governance and funding. Please protect the integrity of the SFCA and vote NO on HB1378-HD2-SD1. At a time when federal funding uncertainties loom, and economic hardships grow, now is NOT the time to strip essential arts funding. We must protect the Works of Art Special Fund to ensure stability for future generations.

Thank you for your consideration,

Cathy Cunningham-Little, Kailua Kona

April 02, 2025

Good afternoon, Legislators:

I am Leigh Nakamura and I have been a Social Studies teacher at Konawaena High School since 2009 and I also started teaching Arts and Crafts in 2018. Thank you for giving us the opportunity to voice our concerns with HB1378 that dismantles essential funding structures for arts and culture programs in Hawai'i. Art plays an integral part in all of our lives and for some, this is the main way that they express themselves. I am concerned that this proposal will negatively impact how our students will be exposed (or not exposed) to culture and the arts.

I am including a pdf compilation of several student testimonials regarding the importance of art in their lives and the need for these types of programs in our schools. Our students are the main reason why we do this and providing these opportunities for them is vital. It allows them to build upon their creativity, problem solving, critical thinking, analysis, and collaboration - all of which are essential skills in our world today. Our students need a variety of ways to express themselves and to help them get through difficult situations in healthy ways. We have seen what not having these types of programs can do and that is why it was deemed necessary to bring them back.

By cutting dedicated funding and offering no viable alternative, this measure puts at risk the very programs that serve our students, working artists, and communities. The Works of Art Special Fund has been a national model and restricting the fund and removing its personnel support function weakens the entire system. With this being said, I am concerned that eliminating the current team members that work with us for the Artists in the Schools Program and others would be detrimental. The team members are familiar with what our keiki and community need. Having been a beneficiary of the AITS Program for six years now, I have truly seen the positive impact that our local artist has had on my classes, our school, and our community. The concepts and principles that we try to teach our young people can be seen in their excitement and pride when they are able to share a part of themselves with others. As a Social Studies and Fine Arts teacher in Hawai'i, it is evident that we need to ensure that the perpetuation of indigenous cultures is focused upon, especially during these times. Please protect the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts' ability to serve Hawai'i through the arts.

Mahalo nui loa for taking the time to read our students' and my thoughts and concerns. We greatly appreciate it and trust that you will prioritize our young people's futures when assessing the impact that HB1378 can have.

Sincerely,



Leigh M. Nakamura
Konawaena High School Social Studies & Arts and Crafts teacher

Why is Art Important?

As a highschool senior I believe art is important to ones growth and development. Art is included in everyone's life and is used to express one's feelings and mind. It evolves us and it's included in what we do or what we see. I've used art as a way of handling my own emotions when things are hard. Or as a way to calm me. I use it so much in my daily life style that it's hard to imagine my life without it. I know the importance of Art and hope others can see it too. It won't always come in the form of colors and drawings.

We need Art in Schools! Art is an extremely important element within the schooling system. Students need a chance to explore artistic interests, hobbies, or even professions. Different art classes are what kids look forward to in school, a chance to express themselves through different mediums. My art class is my favorite class of my senior year (out of 7 other classes) I have learned so many techniques such as sewing, quilting, origami, etc. what I have learned was not just fun it is useful. Do not defund our arts program, students need it! Balance is crucial within our school systems and art is balance. Please don't take away something the kids love, look forward to, and cherish!

Best regards.

-Konawaena High School Senior

My testimony towards School's art funding

PE

Grade 10

I believe that Arts in highschools or elementary should be funded because these Programs are important to many students who engage in hobbies involving Performative and visual arts. It kills students' vivid creativity and gives less practice and opportunity to these children who need the resources to reach their dreams, if their going to take any sort of art course in college it is important their provided practice revolving around their desired art medium, as someone who enjoys arts of many kinds, I greatly appreciate having the privilege of nice high quality supplies at my disposal, aswell as being able to take a class I enjoy during the year and have practice for the Major I want to take, art is important to me just as it is to many others, and the first step to keeping it alive. is providing the opportunities to younger people who are interested, I hope you consider funding the schools and giving the students further a chance at doing what they love or even a discovery of a new found passion.

- Sawyer Newish

Konawaena
HS
Senior

Aloha to whom it may concern,

Art is something that needs to be included in every school. Art is a subject where students can show their creativity and grow as an artist. To do that, we would need funding for art supplies and we would be very thankful if you could provide that for us. Art is a way people can tell their stories, and I would be disappointed if it were to be discontinued. I like art not only because I can draw pretty things, I like art because of the stories told behind every art piece. It is also very helpful for growing my creativity and being able to customize my art with supplies that my school provides us. I kindly ask for your consideration, thank you.

Best Regards,
Konawaena Highschool senior student

Sophomore
Konawaena Highschool

Art is very important to me, Music is important because it helps me focus and relax. Art museums are important because they show the creativity of human beings and what they can accomplish. Electives are important to me because they make school more interesting and without them I would not want to go to school at all. Art is a good elective because it gives me a break from the seriousness of other electives and lets me express creativity. In conclusion, art is an important part of the school curriculum because it lets me be able to exercise a different part of my brain.

What art means to me is that when I do art or even drawing it shows the mood that I'm in or even just any fine line art shows a little something about me and the kind of art that I do is the art of fine line in tattoos and I like to do this type because it shows a life story or a ~~meaning~~ sentimental meaning to the person.

~~an~~ I like to make Polynesian tattoos because I can connect to it as a Hawaiian and it explains what ~~the story~~ ~~is~~ the kind of story the tattoo is trying to tell.

period 7

I believe art class is crucial for education as a whole. Not only does art class give thousands of students the opportunities to improve their skills, but also their creativity. The funding for fine arts class is essential for such a wide variety of different art classes. Taking away the funding, robs so many individuals of the chance to create and express themselves fully. Basically, pulling the funding would result in a massive waste of talent, overall making the world a less colorful and dull place.

Art is the most important thing in a society, art is a building, art is a story, art is the sidewalks you tread on, art is everywhere and without it, the world is bland and empty. Art is so many things and each one is important, shows, movies, sculptures, dance, literature, music, design, in all forms there is something to be enjoyed and by continuing to teach and ~~show~~ share it's emotion, more innovation can be discovered and more things bettered and improved.

Art made so much possible, planes, buildings, cars, phones, the internet, everyday things, someone had to sit down and think of it and then design it.

Art is everything I am. It is all I am good at and what I most enjoy. To continue it would mean the world to me as I struggle to know what I would do without it.

I'm a senior highschool who enjoys art. Art has shaped me into a passionate artist. I have been drawing since as early as I could remember. I hone my skills overtime to where I am now. Not only that I draw, I discover ways to express my ideas in different mediums. I have done drawing, painting, sewing, and writing.

There are many student that I'm sure are interested in art with their ability to make or simply like the history with art. I would certainly not want these opportunities to be taken away from the students with interest in art.

Music is important for me because it calms me down to a state of mind that makes sense and to some of the songs I listen too I can relate or even just positivity.

art is important because it gives me a outlet for my thoughts I personally write poetry and do martial arts and they make me happy and keep me out of trouble

- I see art in everything
- everything is a masterpiece

Art is sometimes my way of expressing myself. ~~It's~~ ~~like~~ like making crafts for the people I love. ~~It's~~ Also Art is special to me because of music. It helps my mood and some songs are special to me and my family.

Art is important to me because it lets me express my imagination and grows my emotions.

Art is a very important part of anyone's education. It allows people to see and try things they wouldn't have done before. It can also allow many to express themselves in many different ways. It can expand their imagination and creativity.

- Art is important because it helps kids and people help think about what to draw and maybe because they're interested in art, but it's also important because it encourages kids to like drawing and coloring.

Art is important because it's a way some people can express themselves. It is also a way to relieve stress and anxiety. And art is a great subject to learn because there is art everywhere. There is art in people, nature, buildings, etc.

Testimony opposing HB1378

Aloha Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Moriwaki, and Members of the Senate Ways and Means Committee,

I am an educator who believes the arts are essential components of education. Therefore, I stand in **strong OPPOSITION to HB1378-HD2**, which threatens long-term arts and culture funding in Hawai'i.

Research has shown "students who had increased arts education experiences saw improvements in writing achievement, emotional and cognitive empathy, school engagement and higher education aspirations, while they had a lower incidence of disciplinary infractions."

(<https://www.nytimes.com/2023/05/02/arts/design/arts-education-necessary.html>)

Please listen to the voices of the people of Hawai'i, who are calling on you to protect the **Works of Art Special Fund**. This special fund has enabled our keiki to build their creative and critical thinking skills through arts education opportunities such as Artists in the Schools, Art Bento, and Art in Public Places. Please find attached messages from **nā keiki**.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

Kelly Nishimura

Dear Lawmakers,

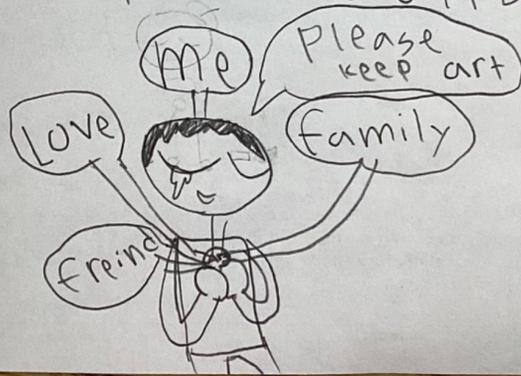
A future without art would be like
a future without personality.

Some laws are good but a law
that takes away art will make
our future lifeless. Please, let
your people have a voice in
your decision, let others give
their opinion, don't make the
decision alone, and think about
what our community needs.

Please support our arts
education.

Sincerely,

Dear Lawmakers, Please keep art. I care art so much because when I was little I always want to be an artist and now I'm a great drawer and I really want art, art is my love, art is my friend, art is my family, and art is me. Please keep it I really care about it's my only thing to keep calm, Peace and love. Stop HB 1378 HD 1!



Dear Lawmakers,
I Loved drama class and
I want others to Have
it too! Please keep it!
Love, 5th grade



Dear Lawmakers, effect me by
I think art is a big part of my education and I don't
want the HB1378 HD1 to become a law. Art is really
important to me because I enjoy performing arts, dancing
and drawing. If this bill became a law my community
wouldn't have as much opportunities to see and create
art. This is why I think HB1378 HD1 shouldn't become
a law.

Sincerely,
A 5th grade
student

Dear lawmakers,
art is so important everywhere! Art can be an
opportunity to express your feelings. Art can
also boost your imagination as well! Art and
creativity can teach history, historic event too! Art
isn't just for one person, art combines us all! Acting
and theatre can also keep you active and having
fun! Please consider this,
Thank you
-our community

Dear lawmakers,
Art is very important to kids. It allows
us to express ourselves with our imagination and
creativity! It helps our education and culture
grow as we learn more about our history and
possible future!

thank you!

- 5th grader

Dear Lawmakers,

I think that art is important, it teaches us kids in different ways. Art comes in many different ways, such as, dance, drawings, painting, and much more. It helps us think about learning in different ways and helps teach kids to learn in more than 1 dimension. In all, I think art improves our learning a lot and I think it is very important.

From,
5th grade student

Dear lawmakers,

Art programs are important to our community and they shouldn't be taken away from other generations. These art programs teach kids how to express themselves through different ways and have students think deeply about choices.

From,
5th grade student

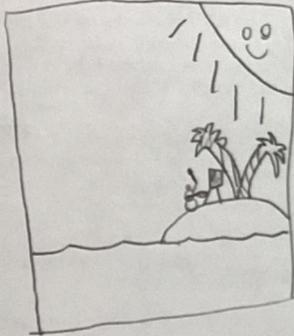
Dear Lawmakers,

I really think arts are a great way to express ourselves and learn about other's opinions. We enjoy getting to experience and create arts. If HB1378-HD1 gets approved, we can't learn about arts & culture. Please protect the 'Works of Art' fund!

Sincerely,
a 5th grader

Dear Lawmaker

I think art is important because when you do it you get to express your thoughts. I also think that art is good because without it many people wouldn't be able to enjoy what they truly want to do. Also many people want to become an artist when they grow up and it like Picasso or Bob Ross.



From Yours Truly:
A 5th Grader

Dear Lawmakers, ^{Grade 5}
4/21/5
art is important because it can tell stories related to culture and keep them alive for generations. Art for me means more than just some pictures, it's a form of communication that can be used worldwide.

Dear Lawmakers

I do not agree to this Bill, because art is something I loved to do since I was little and I want to keep that forever. What I love about art is you get to write a story without saying words and I love how art can be a different kind of art. If you take this away you might be taking thousands of people's dreams, including mine. Please support art, thank you
Sincerely, a 5th grader.



from: 5th grade student | Dear: Law makers

• Drawing makes me feel calm after being mad even when.
I do art with my dad we always do that when we have nothing to do I also think we should keep art it helps! people when we are funding.

Keep Art!



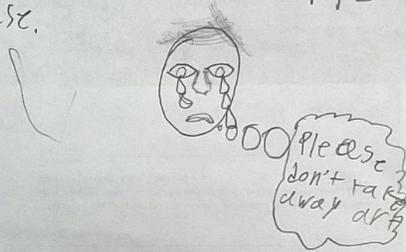
Dear Lawmakers, ^{Save art}
please keep public arts in our lives!
Art is part of our culture like making Kapa
cloth to dancing hula. I really enjoyed a theatre
teacher coming to our school and having
drama classes, and I bet future kids would
enjoy it too. Please reconsider your decision for
passing this bill!

Sincerely,
a fifth grade student

Dear Lawmakers,
I enjoy having art education
and want to continue to do it.
Art education is important because
I'm learning some important things
in the art program and if you
take it away I won't get to learn
them anymore. Please support art's
education.

from, 5th grade student

Dear Lawmakers,
Art is dear to me even if I don't
like art it still means a lot
to me and I used to love
art and make many drawings
for my mom, so I've had
many memories from when
I was a kid so please
don't take away art, now if
you may, I am asking you!
to stop the HB1378 HDI
Please.



Dear Lawmakers,
Art's important to me
because of it's build.
It shows me a lot through
the colors and what's
going on. Plus the future
needs more art that
way they can see all these
different ways in it. People
also make a living off
of their art and if you
take it away they can't
do what they love to do.
Please don't take it
away. From,
5th grader

Dear Lawmakers I disagree with the taking away arts bills, because what is more important than performing arts & art. If the bills are for unnecessary things like making a pad, water, malls, stores, hotels, then you should leave the bill for the performing arts, and if it's for something necessary like homeless shelters, donations, or something then I guess it's fine. Art really means to me because you don't have to use words for art you can visual it.

From: -5th grader

Dear Lawmakers I am a kid who love to make art. Most of the kids love to make art. But pls don't take art away from us. It will brake the kids health. Some art can be so cool but you maben are going to take that from us. So pls don't take art away.

From: 5th grader

4/2/15 5th grader student
Dear lawmaker, For me art is special but to other people it is more than special. I think people need art because to people it could be their job or it could be a family member that passed and they have a painting of them to remember them. so please don't take away art.

HB-1378-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/2/2025 5:08:16 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Susan Polanco de Couet	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

I am writing to strongly **oppose HB1378-HD2-SD1**. This bill dismantles essential funding structures for arts and culture programs in Hawai'i.

Many local artists, emerging artists, and communities depend on these funding opportunities for their continuing development and enrichment of our community.

By cutting dedicated funding and offering no viable alternative, this measure puts at risk the very programs that serve our keiki, working artists, and communities statewide.

The **Works of Art Special Fund** has been a national model. Restricting the fund and removing its personnel support function weakens the entire system.

Please protect the SFCA's ability to serve Hawai'i through the arts. Vote NO on HB1378-HD2-SD1.

Mahalo, Susan Polanco de Couet

HB-1378-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/2/2025 5:14:56 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Dr. Betsy Fisher	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

Vote NO on HB1378-HD2-SD1. This bill dismantles critical funding structures for arts and cultural programs here in Hawai'i. This is critical.

I am a local artist and arts educator who, over the years, has appreciated the wonderful artistic work of community colleagues. It would be horrific to see this important ongoing work destroyed.

By cutting dedicated funding and offering no viable alternative, this measure puts at risk the very programs that serve our keiki, working artists, and communities statewide.

The **Works of Art Special Fund** is a national model. Restricting the fund and removing its personnel support function weakens the entire system.

Vote NO on HB1378-HD2-SD1 and protect the SFCA's ability to serve Hawai'i through the arts.

Sincerely,

Betsy Fisher

HB-1378-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/2/2025 6:29:28 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

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

Comments:

To the Members of the Committee,

I strongly oppose this bill, which will kneecap the dedicated funding stream to public art in the state. Hawaii's percent-for-art law is a national model, ensuring a robust arts programming in a place blessed with cultural riches. As an educator, a parent, and a supporter of the arts, I urge the committee to reject this bill and restore funding to SFCA and the crucial work it does statewide.

With aloha,

David Ball, Waialae-Kahala

HB-1378-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/2/2025 9:41:55 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
kris hara	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly OPPOSE Hb1378-HD2. It is a threat to long term funding of the arts. The Works of Art Special Fund should be preserved as is. We must not threaten Hawaii's only dedicated funding for the arts. Art and Culture are extremely important, especially in these chaotic times. Mahalo nui loa

HB-1378-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/2/2025 9:03:15 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

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

Comments:

I strongly oppose HB1378 HD2 SD1. Hawai'i is a special place. One of the things that makes Hawai'i so special is its commitment to supporting the arts. From works of art in public spaces to teaching artists into the schools, Hawai'i's investment in art and arts education uplifts the community. The arts allow us to express ourselves and to connect to one another in a way nothing else can. This bill would have a devastating impact across all islands on arts organizations, arts education, and artists themselves. I oppose this bill and urge you to protect arts and culture in Hawai'i.

Sincerely,

Jennifer M. Croft

Date: April 2, 2025

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

From: Wassan Al-Khudhairi

Affiliation: Arts worker

Subject: Strong Opposition to HB1378-HD2 SD1

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

My name is Wassan Al-Khudhairi. I'm a Honolulu resident. I am writing to express my strong **opposition to HB1378-HD2**, which threatens the future of arts and culture funding in Hawai'i. Funding for the Arts in Hawaii is crucial to the well being of the community.

I have been an arts curator for over 15 years and most recently I curated and organized the largest contemporary art exhibition in Hawaii the Hawaii Triennial 2025 which is currently taking place on Oahu, Hawaii Island and Maui. I strongly believe the arts provide important spaces for communities to expand their creative thinking while bringing people together to build and strengthen community. The venues where art is shown offers artists space to exhibit and sell their works as well as a chance for everyone to learn to process the world around them through art. The arts are vital to Hawaii— they offer space for expression, connection as well as perpetuate and care for the long history of art making, especially traditional techniques including woodwork, weaving, and other island specific materials.

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. **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.

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

Sincerely,

Wassan Al-Khudhairi

Wassan Al-Khudhairi

HB-1378-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/2/2025 10:07:31 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Margaret Agcaoili	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

As a future music educator I believe that it is very important for financial support for these students to be able to successful in the learning process.

HB-1378-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/2/2025 9:41:40 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Elijah Gamboa	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I'm writing to respectfully oppose HB1378-HD2-SD1. This bill introduces major concerns—especially the restriction of the Works of Art Special Fund and lack of clarity around governance and funding. Please protect the integrity of the SFCA and vote NO on HB1378-HD2-SD1.

HB-1378-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/2/2025 10:35:12 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Alexis Schultz	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

I am writing to urge you to oppose bill HB1378-HD2-SD1.

This bill cuts dedicated funding used for arts education by 100%, and replaces it with less than half the current budgeted amount in general funds.

Half of the Artists in the Schools granted schools do not have a dedicated arts specialist on staff. If arts education funding is cut by these extreme, some of these students will not have any specialized arts education time in their school day. Not only is this extremely inequitable, but countless studies show the relationship between arts experiences and positive mental health, stronger community relationships, and a positive sense of self. This bill aims to diminish the success of Hawai'i's keiki.

Arts education is essential for fostering creativity, critical thinking, and problem-solving skills in students. It enhances academic performance, supports emotional well-being, and provides an inclusive environment for self-expression. Additionally, studies have show that student involved in arts programs demonstrtae improved focus, higher graduation rates, and greater success in future careers. Without the funding that is needed, these schools will deprive students of oppourtunities for growth and enrichment.

Our keiki deserve so much more than what we are currently offering them, and by cutting these funds, we are doing a disservice to them and our community.

Do not allow this bill to be passed.

Mahalo,

Alexis Schultz

UH Manoa scholar of Percussion Preformance and Music Education

alexisschultz790@gmail.com

HB-1378-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/3/2025 5:14:02 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Seamus Hames	Testifying for Rhode Island State Council on the Arts	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

My name is Seamus Hames, and I am the Arts Education Specialist in Rhode Island. I am writing to strongly urge you to oppose bill HB1378-HD2-SD1.

This bill eliminates 100% of the dedicated funding for arts education and replaces it with less than half of the current amount from general funds. In these uncertain times, relying on general funds for the arts is highly unstable and puts vital programs at risk.

My organization in Rhode Island draws inspiration from the work of the Hawai'i State Foundation on Culture and the Arts. Thanks to your previous commitment to securing arts funding, you have been able to support arts education in rural and underserved communities, where schools often lack dedicated arts specialists.

Numerous studies highlight the positive impact of arts experiences on mental health, community connections, and self-esteem. Without reliable and dedicated funding for the arts, Hawai'i's students, and the State of Hawai'i overall, will most certainly face significant negative consequences in all of these areas.

Please oppose this bill.

*Mahalo,
Seamus Hames*

HB-1378-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/3/2025 7:50:12 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Daniel A. Kelin, II	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I oppose bill HB1378 HD2 SD1. As an arts educator with the Honolulu Theatre for Youth and the Arts First Partners, I have spent nearly 40 years creating and conducting programs across the islands in local schools and communities with funding from the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts. Quite simply, there are tens of thousands of children and families who would have never engaged with and through the arts without the dedicated funding that has been available throughout my career as an arts educator. Thousands of those students have gone on to become successful artists in film, television, theatre, as well as as educators, teachers, principals, community social workers, and even in the legislature itself. These individuals consistently point to how their artistic experiences have shaped who they are as individuals and how they contribute back to their communities, whether they are artists or not.

Arts experiences do one thing very well: build community. During a time in which there are forces that are trying to divide us as a community and society, we actually need the availability of the arts statewide more than ever.

The proposed change in funding will result in a reduction in money for the arts. Period. Those who read this know the truth of the statement. The response may be that money will still be available, just through a different funding stream. But do not forget that this alternative funding stream will put the arts in competition with other areas that seek funding, which not only will reduce the amount of financial support for the arts, but also signals a reduction in value of local arts.

Although this bill proposes some support for the arts, it primarily supports O'ahu-centric arts experiences, leaving thousands little to no access to quality arts experiences.

HB-1378-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/2/2025 9:32:57 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
FK Samis	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Moriwaki and members of the Ways & Means Committee,

Expressing strong opposition.

As we witness and experience the effects of massive public funding cuts across the country now more than ever is Hawai'i's moment to take a strong stance on what sets Hawaii apart. We have the opportunity to uphold the indigenous and multicultural values that make Hawai'i not only special but leaders in upholding civil liberties. Our culture and arts not only preserve our rich 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.

Do not allow fear mongering and bullying of an authoritarian federal administration to dismantle the perpetuation of Hawaii's culture and arts for future generations.

The State Foundation for Culture and the Arts supports not only public art but also arts education in public schools, free and public access to arts and supports hundreds of Native Hawaiian practitioners, halau and many many craftspeople and artisans.

As society moves through one of the most challenging and darkest moments in history is precisely the moment when people will need arts and culture. Access to free public museums, performances, music and spaces to process the events occurring will literally save lives.

I urge you to OPPOSE HB1378-HD2-SD1 and to 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.

HB-1378-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/2/2025 5:35:18 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Elizabeth Train	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am writing to oppose HB1378 HD2 SD1. THis bill will severely limit the ability of the SFCA to sustain key programs like Artists in the Schools and Art in Public Places. I am a visual artist who worked in the Artist in the Schools and Art Bento programs, teaching art to students for about 20 years. Most schools do not have any art teachers or art programs so these programs are vital to the education of our local students. The Art in Public Places program is vital to supporting the visual artists in Hawaii. The funding for these programs needs to continue to be supported by the 1% for the arts program that established the SFCA for many years to come. Many artists and art organizations depend on these fund. Please vote NO on this bill!

2 April 2025

Committee on Higher Education
The Hawai'i State House of Representatives
415 S Beretania St.
Honolulu, HI 96813

Re: OPPOSITION to Bill HB1378 HD2 SD1

Dear Chair Dela Cruz and members of the Senate Ways and Means Committee:

My name Michael Oishi, and I am associate professor of literature at Leeward Community College. The statements expressed are my opinions as an individual and do not represent the position of my college.

Please **OPPOSE HB1378 HD2 SD1** which, among other things, amends “the amounts required to be transferred by agencies into the Works of Art Special Fund and the allowable uses of the Special Fund. Appropriates fund.”

The arts are critical to an informed and thriving state, nation, and world. HB1378 HD2 SD1 jeopardizes stable and predictable funding of the arts. Below are some reasons motivating my opposition.

1. 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.
2. The federal government, courtesy of the Department of Government Efficiency (DOGE), is currently eliminating and/or reducing the number and amounts of grants to support the arts. The arts in Hawai'i will have fewer, not more, opportunities for financial support.
3. The loss of stable funding will negatively impact Hawai'i's economy. The arts are an important economic driver and revenue stream for the state. Removing stable and predictable funding for the arts will have many adverse consequences—not only for artists and foundations that will be immediately affected, but also for the many ancillary businesses that benefit from a robust arts community.

For these reasons, I strongly OPPOSE HB1378 HD2 SD1 and ask that you do the same. Mahalo nui for your time and consideration.

Yours Sincerely,

Michael Oishi

Michael Oishi
Mililani, Hawai'i

HB-1378-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/3/2025 2:49:14 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Chad Swan-Badgero	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

My name is Chad Swan-Badgero, and I am the Arts Education Program Manager in Michigan. I am writing to strongly urge you to oppose bill HB1378-HD2-SD1.

This bill eliminates 100% of the dedicated funding for arts education and replaces it with less than half of the current amount from general funds. In these uncertain times, relying on general funds for the arts is highly unstable and puts vital programs at risk.

My organization in Michigan draws inspiration from the work of the Hawai'i State Foundation on Culture and the Arts. Thanks to your previous commitment to securing arts funding, you have been able to support arts education in rural and underserved communities, where schools often lack dedicated arts specialists.

Numerous studies highlight the positive impact of arts experiences on mental health, community connections, and self-esteem. Without reliable and dedicated funding for the arts, Hawai'i's students could face significant negative consequences in all of these areas.

Please oppose this bill.

*Mahalo,
Chad Swan-Badgero*

HB-1378-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/3/2025 6:27:59 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Andrea Simpliciano	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Hello,

I'm an artist, and I am encouraging you to vote NO on this bill and to reconsider your treatment of how you support arts in our culture. I'm concerned why no oral testimony can be made as this is a decision making meeting, since oral testimony can be persuasive as it involves community input. The arts are under attack from both people (U.S. federal government) and technology (AI). Art can be powerful because it is made with human emotions and effort. I am concerned about short-term funding as a solution to the long-term support of the programs mentioned in the bill. I think art can be used as an outlet to not only express oneself but deal with emotions and experiences, as well as bring awareness to social issues. As someone who has seen schools put art program support at a lower priority, please do not cut art programs and let people not only receive art education, but also appreciate art.

HB-1378-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/2/2025 10:49:29 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Mckenzee K Espiritu	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

My name is Mckenzee Espiritu and I am currently a first year college student at the University of Hawai'i studying to be a music educator. If this bill gets passed, every music education student, every educator currently out in the field, and my own future and livelihood will not only be threatend, but most likely completely compromised. Music is an essential element of school curriculums because it enriches students' intellectual, emotional, and social development. Studies have shown that music education enhances cognitive abilities, improving skills in areas such as math, language, and problem-solving. By learning to play instruments, read music, and understand rhythm, students engage in complex brain activities that foster creativity and critical thinking.

Moreover, music encourages emotional expression and social skills. It allows students to process emotions in a healthy way and fosters teamwork through group performances. It can also increase self-esteem and confidence, as students take pride in their musical achievements.

Cutting funding for music programs would be detrimental to students' well-being and future success. Without music education, many children may miss out on discovering a lifelong passion, developing artistic talents, or gaining the social benefits of music-making. Furthermore, music programs often serve as an entry point for students to engage with school and other extracurricular activities, especially those who may struggle academically in traditional subjects. The removal of these opportunities would disproportionately impact students from lower-income backgrounds, denying them an equal chance to thrive.

Finally, music is what makes us human. It is as natural as breathing and is universal across all cultures. Allowing this bill to be passed is inhumane and cheats so many students from living enriched lives. With all of this being said, I deeply implore you to allow music to improve the lives of students as it has always done.

Thank you for your time,

Mckenzee Espiritu

HB-1378-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/2/2025 10:42:39 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Emily McIlroy	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dear Committee Members,

I am writing to urge you to oppose HB1378 until further discussions can be had within the community regarding the source of funding for the Works of Art Special Fund. I was alarmed to observe at the last hearing (March 13th) that so many leaders in the Hawaii arts community did not fully understand the provisions of this bill, as evidenced in the large number of testifiers who expressed gratitude for Senator Lee's opening explanatory comments. Last March, when a similar bill was put forth but ultimately not passed, Senator Lee promised to speak and work with leaders in the art community to try and create more dialogue and understanding of the issues, and to hopefully generate more possible alternatives to the proposed dismantling of the Works of Art Special Fund and Percent for the Arts Law. If these conversations had indeed taken place, as pledged, and if creative dialogue around allocating sources of secure funding for the arts had happened, then why has so much shock and confusion been rippling through the arts community since this bill was put forth? I simply implore you to delay any possible passing of this bill until the promised conversations and dialogues have actually come to pass. Please hold true to your word.

I am a practicing visual artist and have been an instructor in the Drawing and Painting Program at UH Mānoa since 2012. I also served many years working for art outreach programs at the Honolulu Museum of Art and the Hawai‘i State Art Museum, including programs for veterans, adjudicated youth, and English language learners. In my 17 years of working in art education, I have seen with arresting clarity the power of art to enrich, expand, deepen, transform, and heal the hearts and minds of individuals across all age groups and from all backgrounds. I have also directly experienced all of these things through my own art practice, and through my intimate relationship with art.

The percent-for-the-arts law and the Works of Art Special Fund are crucial to ensuring a stable source of funding for the arts in Hawai‘i. The importance of these funds to the health and vibrancy of artists and our whole community cannot be understated. The proposed bill would eliminate reliable support for the arts, forcing artists and art educators into an uncertain struggle to secure funds for a field which, despite its centrality to the well-being of humanity, is continually short on resources. The percent-for-the-arts and the Works of Art Special Fund have allowed me to sustain myself in Hawai‘i as an artist and educator for almost two decades. I know that this is true for many artists working professionally across the state. Please don't let support for the arts be jeopardized by hearing this bill.

Sincerely,
Emily McIlroy

HB-1378-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/2/2025 9:29:33 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kristin wong	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Preserving the arts and continuing arts education on these islands is crucial. We need to continue funding especially for natives and locals of this community or it will disappear. The future generations need to see the intersectionality of art, science, and the natural world.

HB-1378-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/3/2025 7:12:45 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kilihea Inaba	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Committee Members,

This testimony is to respectfully oppose HB1378-HD2-SD1. It is concerning how the restriction of the Works of Art Special Fund and its lack of clarity around governance and funding will have unprecedented effects on the staff that support these programs. Each year this bill arises (or something similar to it) and the people have to fight to keep this as is. If it truly is meant for the betterment of the people and children of Hawai'i, then it should more clearly state what can and can't be done with it.

Mahalo,

Kilihea Inaba

Kaloko, Kona, Hawai'i

HB-1378-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/2/2025 4:51:46 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Cynthia Castro	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I oppose this bill. Thank you

HB-1378-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/2/2025 5:29:06 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
James Goodman	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dear Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Morikawa, and Members of the Committee,

I am writing to express my opposition to HB1378, SD1.

At first glance, HB1378, SD1 appears to be a repackaging of the HB 1807, HD2 that was introduced last year, but it is in fact, significantly worse. While this bill recognizes the important work of the State Foundation on Culture & Arts (SFCA) in serving the people of Hawai‘i , this bill contains funding changes that would essentially end that work:

(5) Amending the funding sources for the state art museum;

(6) Amending the amounts required to be transferred by agencies into the works of art special fund and the allowable uses of moneys from the works of art special fund;

If approved, this bill would nullify the existing law that ensures stable funding for the SFCA that was established through the 1967 Act 298 and the 1989 Act 389. By which, those acts sought to establish and secure the continued support of the arts in a way that could not be easily swept away as HB1378, SD1 proposes to do.

By placing the funding of the SFCA exclusively on federal funds, grants, and general revenue this bill would renege on nearly 60 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.”

In consideration of the above, I ask the members of the Senate Committee on Ways and Means not to approve HB1378, SD1.

Thank you,

James Goodman

HB-1378-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/2/2025 5:34:41 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Paul Janes-Brown	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am Paul Janes-Brown, former co-chair of the Education Committee of the Maui Democratic Party, Reviewer for Akaku and YouTube and arts consultant for the Public Art Selection Committee of the State Foundation on Culture and The Arts. I oppose this bill and urge you to join me in opposition.

The Committee on Transportation Culture and the Arts has recommended delayed implementation of this bill. The committee passed it on with severe reservations. I hope you will see what a damaging bill this is.

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.

Maui's own Masaru "Pundy" Yokouchi, may he rest in peace, 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.

Me ka ha'aha'a,

Paul Janes-Brown

HB-1378-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/3/2025 2:13:41 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Evelyn Aczon Hao	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am writing to strongly **oppose HB1378-HD2-SD1**. This bill does away with funding for arts and culture programs in Hawai'i.

I am a retired educator (teacher and principal). The art community (performing artists, visual artists, and musical artists) have played an integral part in educating my students in the knowledge, skills, and temperament required in making decisions creatively and critically—through art. These skills, needless to say, carry over to other subjects.

This coordination between academic and artistic learning is crucial in developing well-educated persons in our society.

Sincerely, Evelyn Hao

HB-1378-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/3/2025 2:16:51 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Alyce Dodge	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Senate Committee on Ways and Means Chairman Donovan Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Sharon Moriwaki, and members of the committee,

Testimony on HB1378, H.D. 2, S.D. 1

As a teaching artist in the public schools, I do not know all the technical terms in this bill but I do understand that there are proposed cuts to the Hawaii State Foundation on Culture and the Arts (HI SFCA). Please do not cut any funding for the Arts.

The Arts enrich all of our lives in a myriad ways. For children especially, the Arts provide a meaningful way to learn about the world and about themselves. The HI SFCA uses their funds for many art education programs, benefitting students throughout the state. All this would be in jeopardy if funds are cut - and the students would be the ones losing out.

We are already stretching every penny to bring a quality Arts program to as many students as possible. For example, at a Title 1 school, eighty 3rd graders had a ten week Arts residency for under \$4,000; that's less than \$5 per week per child. By the end of the residency each student had created beautiful art works to go with their own writing, producing illustrated poems and stories. All labor and supplies were provided through the SFCA funding - including oil pastels for every student, as well as lessons with monoprinting, drawing, painting, and collage. The teachers and students were very pleased and appreciative of this Arts and writing experience.

Ideally, more funding would be allocated so that every public school could have an Art program for their students. Research shows that the Arts enhance all kinds of learning, scholastic and mental and emotional resilience. The Arts are one good way students practice creative problem solving - so necessary in today's world. There are many gifted young artists in Hawaii and almost every child loves doing Art. They treasure their Art and remember their Art experience. The children are Hawaii's future.

Please do not cut funding for the Arts. I ask you to oppose HB1378, H.D. 2, S.D. 1.

Mahalo,

Alyce Dodge

HB-1378-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/2/2025 9:18:48 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
annie cusick wood	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

I am writing to urge you to oppose bill HB1378-HD2-SD1.

I have lived and worked in Hawaii for 20 years as an arts educator in schools island wide and with all ages. I have witnessed youth perform their first play in front of their families and friends, make their first animated film and have it screened at HIFF and go on to study animation at university in Hawaii . I have many more amazing stories of how arts impacts their lives positively. This bill cuts dedicated funding used for arts education by 100%, and replaces it with less than half the current budgeted amount in general funds.

Half of the Artists in the Schools granted schools do not have a dedicated arts specialist on staff. If arts education funding is cut by these extreme, some of these students will not have any specialized arts education time in their school day. Not only is this extremely inequitable, but countless studies show the relationship between arts experiences and positive mental health, stronger community relationships, and a positive sense of self. This bill aims to diminish the success of Hawai`i's keiki.

In addition, this funding has been supporting immersive art experiences for neurodivergent young people over the past three years. These experiences are designed and created specifically for students who most of the time have never been on a field trip before because of their high needs. By cutting this funding, you would be cutting the opportunity to develop artistic experiences for Hawai'i's most vulnerable population.

Our keiki deserve more than what we are currently offering them, and by cutting these funds, we are doing a disservice to them and our community.

Do not allow this bill to be passed.

Mahalo,

Annie Cusick Wood

Theatre director, writer, teacher.

HB-1378-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/2/2025 6:10:51 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Robbie Berkstresser	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Thank you for your time.

I am writing to oppos **HB1378-HD2-SD1**. This bill dismantles essential funding structures for arts and culture programs in Hawai'i.

By cutting dedicated funding and offering no viable alternative, this measure puts at risk the very programs that serve our keiki, working artists, and communities statewide.

The **Works of Art Special Fund** has been a national model. Restricting the fund and removing its personnel support function weakens the entire system.

Please protect the SFCA's ability to serve Hawai'i through the arts. Vote NO on HB1378-HD2-SD1.

Thank you for your consideration.

Robbie Berkstresser

HB-1378-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/2/2025 5:11:33 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Mikayla	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Art and culture has always been a key component of our lives in Hawai'i. It goes beyond the importance of museums and putting pretty paintings on the wall, it is the roots that keep Hawai'i, Hawai'i.

The history of our home and this island is told through art an culture and would not be the same without it.

PLEASE DO NOT PASS THIS BILL.

HB-1378-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/3/2025 5:59:49 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/3/2025 10:01:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
amy chu	Testifying for Mass Cultural Council	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

My name is Amy Chu, and I am the Arts Education Specialist in Massachusetts. I am writing to strongly urge you to oppose bill HB1378-HD2-SD1.

This bill eliminates 100% of the dedicated funding for arts education and replaces it with less than half of the current amount from general funds. In these uncertain times, relying on general funds for the arts is highly unstable and puts vital programs at risk.

My organization in MA draws inspiration from the work of the Hawai'i State Foundation on Culture and the Arts. Thanks to your previous commitment to securing arts funding, you have been able to support arts education in rural and underserved communities, where schools often lack dedicated arts specialists.

Numerous studies highlight the positive impact of arts experiences on mental health, community connections, and self-esteem. Without reliable and dedicated funding for the arts, Hawai'i's students could face significant negative consequences in all of these areas.

Please oppose this bill.

*Mahalo,
Amy Chu*