



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

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Statement of
JAMES KUNANE TOKIOKA
Director
Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism
before the
**SENATE COMMITTEES ON ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TOURISM
AND HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS**

Tuesday, April 15, 2025
1:10 PM
State Capitol, Conference Room 225

In consideration of
HCR192, HD2
**REQUESTING THE DEPARTMENT OF BUSINESS, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT,
AND TOURISM TO ESTABLISH A NATIVE HAWAIIAN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
WORKING GROUP.**

Chairs DeCoite and Richards, Vice Chairs Wakai and San Buenaventura, and Members of the Committees.

The Department of Business, Economic Development and Tourism (DBEDT) offers its support with comments on HCR192, HD2, which requests DBEDT to establish a Native Hawaiian economic development working group.

While the original title of this measure and name of the working group prior to the amendments are preferred, it is pertinent for the working group to identify economic development opportunities that can benefit Native Hawaiians and study the definition of gaming while considering all options for economic development.

The Native Hawaiian economic development working group provides a valuable opportunity for all state entities involved to get much needed input from the community. Since gaming activities may impact all citizens in the state, it will be necessary to gather input from as many communities and stakeholders as possible.

DBEDT Testimony

April 15, 2025

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A clear line of communication with DBEDT will be key as the staffing for the working group needs to be defined to ensure that the necessary scheduling, management of logistics, and development of agendas can take place.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.



TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HCR 192 HD2
REQUESTING THE DEPARTMENT OF BUSINESS, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, AND
TOURISM TO ESTABLISH A NATIVE HAWAIIAN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
WORKING GROUP.

Senate Committee on Economic Development
Senate Committee on Hawaiian Affairs

April 15, 2025

1:10 pm

Rm. 225

Aloha e Chairs DeCoite and Richards, Vice Chairs Wakai and San Buenaventura and members of the committees:

The Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA) offers strong **SUPPORT for HCR192 HD2** and appreciates the inclusion of OHA as a named member of the Native Hawaiian Economic Development Working Group in this latest version of the resolution. This amendment directly reflects the request made in our prior testimony and we mahalo the Committee for recognizing OHA's role in advancing the economic well-being of Native Hawaiians.

As the constitutionally established body responsible for improving the well-being of Native Hawaiians, OHA operates under the authority of Article XII, Section 5 of the Hawai'i State Constitution and Chapter 10 of the Hawai'i Revised Statutes. These mandates empower OHA to advocate for Native Hawaiians, coordinate services, and formulate policies that address the social and economic conditions of our Lāhui.

This resolution acknowledges a long-standing and urgent reality: Native Hawaiians continue to experience disproportionately high levels of poverty and economic instability. As reflected in the resolution, over fifty-seven percent of Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander households fall below the ALICE threshold, and Native Hawaiians remain among the lowest-earning ethnic groups in the state. The economic hardship facing our people contributes to increasing outmigration, weakening community cohesion and placing the future of our Lāhui at risk.

OHA supports the formation of a Native Hawaiian Economic Development Working Group to identify strategies and pathways that directly benefit Native Hawaiians. We also note the expanded scope in HD2, which calls for a study of the definition of gaming and consideration of all options to spur economic opportunity. We

recognize that this is a complex and potentially controversial area for the Native Hawaiian community, and we emphasize the need for any future proposals to be grounded in community voice, cultural integrity, and long-term benefit.

OHA's Mana i Maui Ola Strategic Plan identifies Economic Stability as a foundational priority. Our agency brings decades of policy and advocacy experience, cultural knowledge, and deep relationships across sectors that can help ensure this working group's efforts are responsive, informed, and grounded in the needs of our people. With our inclusion in HD2, OHA stands ready to serve as a committed partner and fully participate in the working group's deliberations and reporting duties.

Ka pouhana o ke ea o ka Lāhui—the pillar of sovereignty for our people—depends on the economic strength and stability of Native Hawaiians in their homeland. **We thank the Committee for advancing this measure and reaffirm our commitment to contributing meaningfully to the working group's success.**

Mahalo nui for the opportunity to testify on this important measure.

**DEPARTMENT OF THE PROSECUTING ATTORNEY
KA 'OIHANA O KA LOIO HO'OPI'I
CITY AND COUNTY OF HONOLULU**

ALII PLACE
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STEVEN S. ALM
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THOMAS J. BRADY
FIRST DEPUTY PROSECUTING ATTORNEY
HOPE MUA LOIO HO'OPI'I

**THE HONORABLE LYNN DECOITE, CHAIR
SENATE COMMITTEE ON
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TOURISM**

AND

**THE HONORABLE HERBERT M. "TIM" RICHARDS, III, CHAIR
SENATE COMMITTEE ON HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS**

**Thirty-Third State Legislature
Regular Session of 2025
State of Hawai'i**

April 15, 2025

**RE: H.C.R. 192, H.D. 2; REQUESTING THE DEPARTMENT OF BUSINESS,
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, AND TOURISM TO ESTABLISH A NATIVE
HAWAIIAN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT WORKING GROUP.**

Chairs DeCoite and Richards, Vice-Chairs Wakai and San Buenaventura, and members of the Senates Committee on Economic Development and Tourism and Hawaiian Affairs, the Department of the Prosecuting Attorney of the City and County of Honolulu ("Department") submits the following testimony in **strong opposition** of H.C. R. 192, H.D. 2.

My name is Steve Alm and I am the Prosecuting Attorney for the City and County of Honolulu. My number one job is to protect the people of our county. This resolution, if passed, would promote an activity that would be harmful to the residents of Hawai'i. Gambling is illegal for good reasons and should not be considered as a "pathway to spur economic opportunity for Native Hawaiians".

In the preamble of House Concurrent Resolution 192, H.B. 2, it cites that Native Hawaiians: (1) "...experience high levels of poverty..."; (2) account for 57% of Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders who fall below the ALICE threshold; and (3) are amongst the "...lowest-earning ethnic groups in the State...". We stand in *strong opposition* to this resolution, in part, because it charges the Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism, to look at gaming as a way out for Native Hawaiians, when in fact, gaming and gambling will do just the opposite. It will only exacerbate the poor financial conditions for Native Hawaiians. The Department is not opposed to a working group to "...[i]dentify economic

development initiatives that directly benefit Native Hawaiians...". However, including "gaming" in that work, is not appropriate as gaming will only harm our citizens. This working group is not created to study and measure whether legalized gambling would be a good or bad thing for Hawai'i. It is to enable and promote legalized gambling of all forms.

The societal costs are real for many people in our state despite gambling being illegal. In a 2016 article in the Hawai'i Journal of Medicine & Public Health, the estimated "social and financial damage from problem gambling" was \$26,300,000.¹ This study found that each problem gambler could "cost society \$1200 each year." This was the cost in 2016. Since then these costs have risen which means that we are paying more, already. Problem gamblers also "suffer from other addictions, mental illness, and medical problems", all which "place a high burden on our healthcare system."²

Research from the University at Buffalo Clinical and Research Institute on Addictions found:

- An estimated 750,000 of America's youth — between the ages of 14 and 21 — are problem gamblers (they gamble more than intended or steal money to support gambling).
- 11% of youth gamble twice per week or more; 68% report gambling at least once in the past year.
- Frequent and problem gambling numbers rise as socioeconomic status (SES) declines; gambling involvement tends to decrease as SES rises.³

Recent research by the Rady School of Management (University of California San Diego) found that online gambling "...legalization leads to more irresponsible gambling spending among lower-income consumers than many higher-income gamblers." Given Hawai'i's high cost of living, do we really want to do harm to our poorer residents? The research also found that of the more than 700,000 gamblers they studied, 96% lost money to online gambling. Only 4% won and the online platforms often banned or throttle frequent winners' bets. Would Hawai'i want the legislature to legalize something where 96% of our residents would lose money?

Research has also found that legalized sports wagering increases intimate partner violence.⁴ "...[W]hen sports gambling is legalized, the effect of NFL home team upset losses on intimate partner violence increases by around ten percentage points."

Just this month, on April 3, 2025, the Mayor and the City Council of Baltimore filed a complaint against DraftKings and FanDuel alleging that their business model and platform are designed to create more problem gamblers, adding to the growing gambling addiction problems in the City.⁵

¹ Piliwaiwai: Problem Gambling in Hawai'i; Hawai'i J Med Public Health. 2016 Mar; 75(3):73-77; <https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC4795333/>

² Id.

³ RIA Expert Summary Gambling, published April 24, 2012; https://www.buffalo.edu/cria/news_events/es/es3.html#:~:text=An%20estimated%20750%2C000%20of%20America's,%2C%2030%25%20to%2012%25.

⁴ Sports Betting Legalization Amplifies Emotional Cues & Intimate Partner Violence; Kyutaro Matsuzawa and Emily Arnesen, August 27, 2024; https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=4938642

⁵ Complaint filed in the Circuit Court for Baltimore City; April 3, 2025; <https://dicellolevitt.com/wp-content/uploads/2025/04/Sports-Gambling-Complaint-City-of-Baltimore-Stamped-Copy.pdf>

These statistics beg the question--Why do we need to study an activity that we already know will cause harm to our citizens? Some will pose the argument that people are already gambling, even though it is illegal. However, the illegality of commercialized gambling in our state is the very tool that is keeping many more from participating in it. If we allow legalized gambling and put the societal stamp of approval on it, the many individuals who are deterred from wasting their lives and finances away, will then participate. This is not worth the few extra tax dollars legal gambling would generate.

Furthermore, in Sports Wagering testimony on February 24, 2025, the Hawai'i Department of Taxation said that legalizing sports wagering would only generate \$5.3 million in revenue in FY 2026, only \$5.5 million in FY 2027, and only \$5.7 million in FY 2028 with a budget of \$10 million for the state; is it worth it?

Sports wagering has the potential to tarnish Hawai'i's love of sports. Do we want fans cheering on the UH Football team or Volleyball team to win, rather than looking at their phones betting to see if the kicker makes a field goal or if the serve is an ace?

Finally, given the availability of gambling in other locations, it is unlikely many tourists will be coming to Hawai'i specifically to gamble. Any tourist who gambles means its money not spent on dinner at Gyotaku or Roy's, shopping at Ala Moana Shopping Center, or a visit to the Polynesian Cultural Center.

For all of the foregoing reasons, the Department of the Prosecuting Attorney of the City and County of Honolulu **strongly opposes** the passage of H.C.R. 192, H.D. 2, unless the consideration of gaming as a pathway to spur economic growth is deleted from this resolution. Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this matter.



Aloha Hālawā District Partners

Senator Lynn DeCoite, Chair

Senator Glenn Wakai, Vice Chair

Senate Committee on Economic Development and Tourism

Senator Herbert “Tim” Richards, Chair

Senator Joy San Buenaventura, Vice Chair

Senate Committee on Hawaiian Affairs

Date: Tuesday, April 15

Time: 1:10 p.m.

Place: Hawaii State Capitol, Room 225

Re: HCR192 HD2 - REQUESTING THE DEPARTMENT OF BUSINESS, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, AND TOURISM TO ESTABLISH A NATIVE HAWAIIAN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT WORKING GROUP.

Aloha Chairs DeCoite and Richards, Vice Chairs Wakai and San Buenaventura, and members of the Committees,

We offer comments on HCR192 HD2, which calls for the establishment of a Native Hawaiian Economic Development Working Group within the Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism. While we support the intent of the resolution, we respectfully request that the original language and purpose be restored with an amendment to add Aloha Hālawā District Partners (AHDP). The original version of HCR192 ensured Native Hawaiian representation and was more inclusive in shaping a comprehensive economic development strategy.

In our original testimony to HCR192, AHDP requested to be included in the Gaming Working Group. As the selected development partner for the New Aloha Stadium Entertainment District (NASED), AHDP brings critical experience and community engagement that would help align gaming discussions with NASED’s long-term goals.

AHDP has actively engaged the local community outreach, hosted public meetings and listening sessions to incorporate resident feedback into NASED’s planning and development. Including AHDP in the Gaming Working Group would help ensure that community voices continue to be heard in any future considerations regarding gaming.

We stand ready to support the working group and appreciate the thoughtful dialogue that has taken place.

Mahalo for the opportunity to provide comments and for your continued consideration.



Iron Workers Stabilization Fund

LATE

T. George Paris
Managing Director

April 15, 2025

1:15PM

Senate Committees on Economic Development & Tourism and Hawaiian Affairs
CR 423 & Videoconference

Re: HCR192 HD2- Relating to Testimony in Support -Native Hawaiian Economic Development Working Group; Gambling; Legislative Report

The Ironworkers Stabilization Fund in strong support of HCR192 HD2 which establishes a Tourism and Gaming Working Group within the Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism (DBEDT).

Creating this working group is a crucial step in understanding the complex relationship between tourism and the potential introduction of legalized gaming in Hawaii. A comprehensive and thoughtful approach is essential when considering such a significant policy shift. This working group will provide a valuable forum for stakeholders to discuss the potential impacts – both positive and negative – of legalized gaming on our state's economy, communities, and existing tourism industry. The required report to the Legislature will ensure transparency and inform data-driven decision-making.

Furthermore, we strongly support the inclusion of an individual with experience in the area of labor on the taskforce. Labor organizations, like ours, have a unique understanding of the needs of our communities and the potential impacts of legalized gaming on working families. Our members are often the ones who build the infrastructure associated with such projects and therefore have a vested interest in their responsible development. Including labor's perspective is vital for workforce development, community impact, and responsible development.

Including labor's voice in this process will ensure that any decisions regarding legalized gaming are made with the best interests of Hawaii's workers and communities in mind. We believe that a balanced and inclusive approach, incorporating the perspectives of all stakeholders, is essential for the success of this working group. I urge the committee to approve SCR121.

“We are keeping the pennies and watching the dollars fly away, soon we’ll lose the pennies and end up with zero”

T. George Paris
Managing Director

**Hawai'i State Senate Committees on
Economic Development and Tourism & Hawaiian Affairs**

HCR192, HD2 – Requesting the Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism
to Establish a Native Hawaiian Economic Development Working Group

RE: Strong support of HCR192, HD2

April 15, 2025

The Council for Native Hawaiian Advancement (CNHA) writes in **strong support of HCR192, HD2**, which seeks to create a Native Hawaiian economic development working group that would identify initiatives to directly benefit Native Hawaiians, including gaming as an option to spur economic opportunity. This resolution brings together industry, government, and community partners to explore all available options and help make informed decisions that will responsibly grow our economy.

Gaming has brought a significant amount of economic prosperity to other Indigenous groups in the U.S. One study on the social and economic impact of Native American casinos found that young adults moved back to reservations and fueled an 11.5 percent population increase; adult employment increased by 26 percent; the number of working poor declined by 14 percent; and mortality declined in counties with or near a casino. Tribal gaming revenue often funds basic services including education, natural resources, human services, and infrastructure investments.

However, the introduction of gaming does not come without increased risks, such as disproportionate impacts on low-income communities and the potential for increased crime rates. It is necessary to establish a comprehensive framework for legalized gambling that effectively mitigates social risk while still moving towards economic sovereignty for Native Hawaiians. This working group is a critical component to exploring a new industry with significant potential for our lāhui.

As we explore new economic territories for the state, it's crucial to address economic disparity through a process led by those most affected. This measure has the potential to help residents and Native Hawaiian families build a future in Hawai'i. For these reasons, we humbly ask that you **PASS HCR192, HD2**.

Me ka ha'aha'a,

Madelyn McKeague

Director of Advocacy, CNHA

HCR-192-HD-2

Submitted on: 4/14/2025 12:24:02 PM

Testimony for EDT on 4/15/2025 1:10:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Pu'uhonua Bumpy Kanahele	Testifying for NATION OF HAWAII	Support	In Person

Comments:

Testimony of Pu'uhonua Dennis B.K. Kanahele

President, Nation of Hawai'i

In Strong Support of HCR192 HD2

Aloha Chair Wakai, Chair Shimabukuro, Vice Chairs, and Members of the Committees,

My name is Pu'uhonua Dennis B.K. Kanahele, and I submit this testimony on behalf of the Nation of Hawai'i in strong support of HCR192 HD2. This resolution marks a meaningful and necessary step toward building an economic future that is rooted in truth, responsibility, and the restoration of Native Hawaiian leadership. Native Hawaiians are not simply participants in this process. We are the Indigenous people of these islands, and our relationship with the land is not transactional. It is genealogical. The lands at the center of today's development discussions are not just locations for growth. They are our inheritance. They are tied to our history, our cultural practices, and our continued survival as a people. Despite the history of displacement and ongoing marginalization, we have never surrendered our obligation to care for and speak for our 'āina. This resolution rightfully creates a working group to focus on Native Hawaiian economic development. It does not treat us as an afterthought or a checkbox but acknowledges the need for leadership that is grounded in culture, community, and place. The inclusion of Native Hawaiian institutions and voices is essential if we are serious about restoring balance and creating long-term solutions to the economic challenges our people face. Importantly, HCR192 HD2 also recognizes the need to keep policy development free from undue influence. Previous proposals were tainted by the inclusion of corporate operators seeking to shape outcomes that served their own bottom lines. This would be in similar fashion to SB 891 and SCR 121. This resolution avoids that mistake. It creates space for Native Hawaiians to lead the conversation rather than be overshadowed by outside interests. This is not a rejection of dialogue with industry, but a commitment to ensuring the rules are not written by those who benefit most from bending them.

We stand ready to contribute and look forward to serving on this group, discussing some of the very things we have been working on for the past several years, including gaming. We are not asking to be included. We are reaffirming our rightful role in shaping the future of our lands and people. Let this working group be a place where truth is honored, where justice is pursued, and where economic solutions emerge from within the community, not imposed upon it.

Mahalo for your time and for advancing a resolution that begins to rebuild trust and realign the conversation with the values of this land and its people.

Pu‘uhonua Dennis B.K. Kanahale

President, Nation of Hawai‘i

HCR-192-HD-2

Submitted on: 4/14/2025 12:32:13 PM

Testimony for EDT on 4/15/2025 1:10:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Brandon Makaawaawa	Testifying for Nation of Hawaii	Support	In Person

Comments:

Testimony of Brandon Maka‘awa‘awa

Vice President, Nation of Hawai‘i

In Strong Support of HCR192 HD2

Aloha Chairs DeCoite and Richards, Vice Chairs, and Members of the Committees,

My name is Brandon Maka‘awa‘awa, and I serve as Vice President of the Nation of Hawai‘i. I submit this testimony in strong support of HCR192 HD2, a resolution that reflects an important shift toward restoring Native Hawaiian leadership in shaping the economic future of our islands.

For too long, Native Hawaiians have been pushed to the margins of decision-making, even while the policies being shaped have impacted our communities the most. Outside interests have been given access, while Native voices have been excluded. Corporations and

This

resolution begins to correct that imbalance by ensuring that Native Hawaiians are centered in economic planning, not treated as an afterthought.

HCR192 HD2 goes beyond basic inclusion. It acknowledges the need for Native Hawaiian leaders with cultural, legal, and economic expertise to help guide this work. This is how we ensure policies are grounded in the values and realities of our communities. It also provides a better process. By shifting the focus away from predetermined outcomes, the resolution allows for a more thoughtful study of gaming and other economic options. This promotes transparency

and builds trust.

This working group, if carried out with care and integrity, has the potential to set a new standard for how we think about development. Native Hawaiians should not have to defend our place in the conversation. We belong at the center of it. This resolution affirms that truth and begins to create a more just, inclusive process for building Hawai'i's future. We look forward to leading those conversations once this hopefully passes this year and leading our future.

I respectfully urge this committee to pass HCR192 HD2 and to stand in support of a process that puts Native Hawaiian leadership at the heart of economic development.

Mahalo nui loa for your time and for your commitment to a more equitable Hawai'i.

Brandon Maka'awa'awa

Vice President, Nation of Hawai'i

INDEPENDENT & SOVEREIGN NATION STATE OF HAWAI'I



EXECUTIVE

Office of the Foreign Minister
41-1300 Waikupanaha Street Waimānalo, HI 96795

Testimony of John Kealoha Garcia Second Vice President, Foreign Affairs & Commerce, Nation of Hawai'i

In Strong Support of HCR192 HD2

Aloha Chairs DeCoite and Richards, Vice Chairs, and Members of the Committees,

My name is John Kealoha Garcia, and I offer this testimony in strong support of HCR192 HD2 on behalf of the Nation of Hawai'i.

This resolution is more than a policy discussion. It is a long-overdue acknowledgment that Native Hawaiians must be central to decisions that shape our economic future. We are not observers in this process. We are the Indigenous people of this land, and our leadership is essential to creating economic pathways that are responsible, community-based, and culturally grounded.

For decades, economic planning in Hawai'i has often ignored the voice of Native Hawaiians. Policies have been driven by outside priorities, with profits extracted from our lands while our communities carry the consequences. HCR192 HD2 offers a new direction. It affirms that Native Hawaiian leadership should guide efforts that directly impact our families, our 'āina, and our future.

INDEPENDENT & SOVEREIGN NATION STATE OF HAWAI'I



EXECUTIVE

Office of the Foreign Minister

41-1300 Waikupanaha Street Waimānalo, HI 96795

The updated language in HD2 strengthens the resolution's intent. It adds representation from Native Hawaiian institutions with cultural and economic knowledge and removes the notion that gaming is a foregone conclusion. Instead, it treats gaming as one of many areas to be thoughtfully studied. That approach builds trust and ensures that decisions are based on what truly benefits Native Hawaiians.

This is not about asking for permission to participate. It is about reclaiming our role in shaping the future of our homeland. The table being set by this resolution sits on Native land. It is only right that Native Hawaiians lead the conversation about how it serves our people.

I respectfully urge the committee to pass HCR192 HD2 and support a working group that reflects integrity, fairness, and community-rooted leadership. Let us move forward together in a way that honors both the past and the possibilities ahead.

Mahalo nui loa for your time and consideration.

John Kealoha Garcia

Second Vice President, Foreign Affairs & Commerce, Nation of Hawai'i

HCR-192-HD-2

Submitted on: 4/14/2025 1:04:16 PM

Testimony for EDT on 4/15/2025 1:10:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Dwayne Bautista	Individual	Support	In Person

Comments:

I STRONGLY SUPPORT THIS BILL HCR 192 HD 2

LATE

HCR-192-HD-2

Submitted on: 4/15/2025 8:10:00 AM

Testimony for EDT on 4/15/2025 1:10:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Mel Kahele	Individual	Support	In Person

Comments:

Aloha Chairs and Members of the committees

I'm in strong support of HCR192 HD2.

Mel Kahele

LATE

HCR-192-HD-2

Submitted on: 4/15/2025 8:18:18 AM

Testimony for EDT on 4/15/2025 1:10:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Sheila Medeiros	Individual	Oppose	In Person

Comments:

I strongly oppose legalizing gambling in Hawaii—it’s a dangerous gamble that promises wealth but delivers destruction to our communities. The evidence is undeniable: gambling fuels addiction across ethnic groups. A 2016 Piliwaiwai study found 33.2% of Honolulu’s Filipino Americans, 28% of Native Hawaiians, and 25% of Japanese Americans gamble yearly, with addiction rates climbing. States like Pennsylvania saw a 10% surge in addiction hotline calls after legalizing casinos, per a 2022 Civil Beat report, a trend that would hit Hawaii’s diverse population hard. Crime surges in gambling hubs—Las Vegas has a 20% higher violent crime rate than non-gambling cities, per 2023 FBI data, and a 2025 Justice Department case linked Oahu’s illegal game rooms to meth trafficking. Human trafficking thrives in gambling zones; Nevada’s legalized scene correlates with a 30% higher trafficking rate, per a 2021 Polaris study, endangering vulnerable groups like Pacific Islanders and Asians. Families crumble—40% of gambling addicts face divorce, per a 2023 Hawaii Island Recovery report, leaving Native Hawaiian, Filipino, and other keiki neglected. Corruption festers in gambling systems, and Hawaii’s government, scarred by 2022 bribery scandals, can’t be trusted to manage it. Legalizing gambling would deepen these harms, tearing at the fabric of our multicultural aloha spirit for a false promise of revenue. Hawaii’s strength is in its people—Native Hawaiian, Filipino, Japanese, and beyond—not casinos. Keep gambling out.

LATE

HCR-192-HD-2

Submitted on: 4/15/2025 10:42:24 AM

Testimony for EDT on 4/15/2025 1:10:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Rokeuaine Letua	Individual	Oppose	In Person

Comments:

I strongly disagree with this bill because it's negative effects on the families of our islands and our communities. It will bring addictive behaviors and violence in the homes and communities around the islands. Strong arms and money laundering will spread through out the communities. Gambling also will bring prostitution and drugs into its rooms. So I strongly in opposition of this bill.

HCR-192-HD-2

Submitted on: 4/11/2025 12:40:15 PM

Testimony for EDT on 4/15/2025 1:10:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Johnnie-Mae L. Perry	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I, Johnnie-Mae L. Perry, STRONGLY OPPOSE

192 HCR REQUESTING THE DEPARTMENT OF BUSINESS, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, AND TOURISM TO ESTABLISH A NATIVE HAWAIIAN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT WORKING GROUP.

GAMBLING WILL CONTINUE TO TARGET THE VULNERABLE RACE SUCH AS THE NATIVE HAWAIIANS!

HCR-192-HD-2

Submitted on: 4/13/2025 11:12:31 AM

Testimony for EDT on 4/15/2025 1:10:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Leimomi Khan	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Earlier, I supported the intent of the resolution and offered amendment to delete that provision concerning gaming. Since that provision has not been deleted, I oppose this resolution for the reasons stated in the Prosecuting Attorney's testimony. Further, I have the definite impression that this resolution is not about Native Hawaiian Economic Development, but rather about gaming through the guise of Native Hawaiian economic development. Lastly, the way the reso reads regarding CNHA and NHCC is nebulous.

HCR-192-HD-2

Submitted on: 4/14/2025 10:30:30 AM

Testimony for EDT on 4/15/2025 1:10:00 PM

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

Comments:

I support this bill

LATE

HCR-192-HD-2

Submitted on: 4/14/2025 1:15:04 PM

Testimony for EDT on 4/15/2025 1:10:00 PM

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

Comments:

Senators,

I strongly oppose HCR192, all forms.

The continental US is seeing a surge in gambling addiction, especially after the 2018 Supreme Court ruling to overturn PASPA. There's been a lot of reporting about it at the national level -- please research.

We need to first study the impacts of gambling before examining ways to implement it. Please change this reso to do just that and include DOH, IHS, CFS, DVAC, and other social service providers who can weigh in on the consequences of legalized gambling to our state.

Thank you,

Christine Otto Zaa

- ['A serious disease': Congress weighs federal gambling crackdown amid growing concerns](#)
- [A bad bet? The dangers of sports gambling addiction](#)
- [HBO's Last Week Tonight with John Oliver - "Sports Betting"](#)
- [60 Minutes: Sports betting boom fuels concerns over problem gambling](#)
- [The Big Gamble: The world of online sports betting in the US](#)
- [Stop Predatory Gambling](#): National nonprofit working to stop predatory gambling
- [The predatory gambling industry is misleading voters](#): "Gambling companies are convincing states to legalize sports betting with promises of tax-revenue windfalls. The benefits are often less than promised--and they come at a severe human cost."

- [As gambling addiction rates rise, keep an eye on grandma this Super Bowl](#)
- ['Addictive, Exploitive, Manipulative': Les Bernal breaks down predatory gambling ahead of Super Bowl](#): "When gambling is used as a business, there is a predatory and adversarial relationship between the gambling operator and its customer. That's how they make their money. It's the only business in the world where the business owner or the business operator is trying to hurt you."
- ['Don't Be a Loser': NCAA launches sports betting anti-harassment video](#): "Last year's study found 1 in 3 student-athletes received abusive messages from those with a betting interest; 80% of the abuse was directed at March Madness men's and women's student-athletes, with women's basketball student-athletes receiving approximately three times more threats than men's basketball student-athletes."
- [Sports betting culture negatively impacts mental health; NCAA works to support student-athletes](#)
- [Gambling addiction hotlines say volume is up and callers are younger as online sports betting booms](#)

LATE

HCR-192-HD-2

Submitted on: 4/14/2025 3:37:45 PM

Testimony for EDT on 4/15/2025 1:10:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Gail Yoshioka	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I apologize for you not having 24 hours to review my testimony, but I need time to process. So I hope that you will consider my late testimony. The House is proposing to create a “Native Hawaiian Economic Development Working Group, the reason being that it needs to find ways to alleviate problems that the native Hawaiians are experiencing, such as higher levels of poverty. I oppose this, if this group is being created just to get HB1308 passed.

Gaming should not be mentioned as one of their tasks. Solutions should come from the group, what they think is best for Native Hawaiians. When the work group is tasked with “defining gaming” and when a member of the group needs to be someone who is experienced with behavioral addictions, I see it as exploitative, that this group is just being created to get legalized gambling into law. Also, now it seems that HB1308 may possibly open the gateway for other forms of “gaming”(whatever the definition is decided on by this group), not just sports wagering. Did the legislators meet with the various native Hawaiian groups prior to creating HB1308 (as I see the HCR 192 being tied to)? If the focus is on helping native Hawaiians, which I’m sure we are all wanting to find solutions to the problems that they face, why didn’t the bill state that the revenue will be used to support Native Hawaiian initiatives from the start? If this bill was created to serve the Native Hawaiian community, then it should have been a “whereas” in the original bill. And, if moving forward, the focus will be on generating revenue to serve the Native Hawaiian community, then they should be the majority on this committee and should have a say on who best represents them. And, if “gaming” is the purpose of this group, then it should be made clear.

Maybe all of the revenue should go to provide the Native Hawaiian communities to improve affordable housing, support schools with a high number of native Hawaiian students, provide grants for higher education for Native Hawaiians, and for conservation of their land and culture. Don’t just use people to get your bill passed. Should this bill finally be passed, I pray that there will be enough money spent on treating the 3 out of every 100 people who will find themselves addicted, as well as supporting their loved ones who will also have suffered from this potentially debilitating disorder.

Again, the legislators are looking for the “easy fix” which may end up bringing more problems than solutions to our state. We cannot even manage the illegal gambling that we already have. Also, on the SCR it seems that tourism is being thrown into the mix. Do you really think that tourist will come to Hawaii to gamble when there are so many other reasons to come here? Why do you think Las Vegas had to look towards tourism for revenue? Do you think anyone would go

there if they had not? We need to find something that “fits” Hawaii. I am not a native Hawaiian so I cannot speak for them, but I know that where there is gambling (legal or illegal) people and families suffer when there is addiction. And, there is no guarantee that revenue from gambling (let alone sports wagering) will cover the cost of treatment, promotion costs by the State, regulations and enforcement, and the cost of addressing crime stemming from gambling addictions and possibly more organized crime. Don’t create the work group just because you want to justify and promote legalized gambling. Do it for the right reasons.

LATE

HCR-192-HD-2

Submitted on: 4/15/2025 1:35:34 AM

Testimony for EDT on 4/15/2025 1:10:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Gail Olayan	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I oppuse this bill, in hopes to avoid the ill effects that come with this proposed bill. Look at Vegas, surely not a cultured or family oriented state of Aloha.

LATE

HCR-192-HD-2

Submitted on: 4/15/2025 5:32:13 AM

Testimony for EDT on 4/15/2025 1:10:00 PM

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

Comments:

I oppose HCR 192.No gambling in hawaii.It will bring more criminal activity.We already have enough criminals police cannot handle.This government is so foolish because they only think of money not repercussions.They also get bought out!!!They themselves are criminals.