

Testimony of KAREN EWALD, Executive Director

State Foundation on Culture and the Arts

Before the

SENATE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND CULTURE AND THE ARTS

Tuesday , February 11, 2025 Conference Room 224 at 3:01PM

SENATE BILL 441

RELATING TO THE HAWAII SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA



HAWAII

STATE FOUNDATION on
CULTURE and the ARTS

No. 1 Capitol District Building
250 South Hotel Street
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Honolulu, HI 96813

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Chair Lee and members of the Committee,

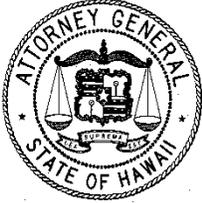
the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts (SFCA), is pleased to offer **COMMENTS** on S.B.441 which Designates the Hawai'i Symphony Orchestra as the State of Hawai'i Symphony Orchestra. Requires annual reports to the Legislature. Appropriation.

The performing arts in Hawaii are a vital part of our community and currently receive SFCA support through General Fund appropriations from the legislature and Federal funding from the National Endowment for the Arts. Performing Arts, including cultural presentations, represent 43% of total Biennium Grants awards and 72% of total Artists in the Schools projects. Music and music education are an important part of the cultural landscape. Hawaii, in the center of the Pacific Ocean is blessed with a variety of musical traditions. The Hawaii Symphony Orchestra represents the finest in the orchestral tradition in Hawaii, serving the public and schools statewide.

The Hawaii Symphony Orchestra regularly receives state funds in the form of grants from the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts, Grants in Aid from the Hawaii legislature and quarterly dividends from State funds in the Hawaii Symphony Endowment fund.

The Hawaii Legislature initially gave \$2 million decades ago to establish the Honolulu Symphony Foundation Endowment. Then in 2006, the Hawaii State Legislature passed HB3235 HD1 SD1 CD1 Act 097 appropriating \$4,000,000 to the State of Hawaii Endowment fund to support the Honolulu Symphony Orchestra, now known as the Hawaii Symphony Orchestra. The intent of the grant was to provide regular State support and requires the fund to be matched with private funds. The fund has grown over the years and provides regular dividends to support the Hawaii Symphony Orchestra. Understanding the status and performance of the fund is an important step when considering establishing additional State support. Should the legislature appropriate funds, the SFCA recommends the funds go to the endowment.

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



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

ON THE FOLLOWING MEASURE:

S.B. NO. 441, RELATING TO THE HAWAII SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA.

BEFORE THE:

SENATE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND CULTURE AND THE ARTS

DATE: Tuesday, February 11, 2025 **TIME:** 3:01 p.m.

LOCATION: State Capitol, Room 224

TESTIFIER(S): Anne E. Lopez, Attorney General, or
Randall S. Nishiyama, Deputy Attorney General

Chair Lee and Members of the Committee:

The Department of the Attorney General provides the following comments regarding this bill.

This bill designates the Hawaii Symphony Orchestra (HSO) as the "State of Hawaii Symphony Orchestra" and exempts it from the qualifying standards and conditions contained in chapter 42F, Hawaii Revised Statutes (HRS), to allow it to regularly receive state funds without filing a grant application as required by chapter 42F in exchange for services to the State to be mutually negotiated.

1. A Preamble Should Be Added to Senate Bill No. 441 to Promote the Public's Understanding of the Legislature's Intent of this Bill

We note that the Legislature in Act 382, Session Laws of Hawaii (SLH) 1987, established the Honolulu Symphony Endowment Fund to provide financial support to the Honolulu Symphony. The legislative history of Act 382 stated that the "Honolulu Symphony is a major cultural resource of Hawaii and is deserving of the support provided in this bill." Senate Standing Committee Report No. 802 (1987).

In Act 258, SLH 1988, the name of the Honolulu Symphony Endowment Fund was changed to the State of Hawaii Endowment Fund. Subsequently, in Act 175, SLH 1995, the Legislature, in section 1 of the Act, noted that the purpose of the Act "is to clarify the legislative intent that the income and capital gains of the State of Hawaii endowment fund are to be used for the production of music by an Oahu-based

symphony orchestra." We understand that such moneys have been transferred to the HSO "for the production of music by an Oahu-based symphony orchestra."

Also, we note that the legislative history of Act 175 states that "the legislative intent to establish the endowment was to support a live symphonic orchestra for the residents in Hawaii." Conference Committee Report No. 103 (1995). Consequently, we believe that the HSO serves a public purpose.

Further, article VII, section 4, of the Hawaii Constitution, provides that "[n]o grant of public money or property shall be made except pursuant to standards provided by law." The HSO is a domestic nonprofit corporation. The attempt to statutorily exempt a nonprofit from the chapter 42F, HRS, standards that are constitutionally required is subject to challenge. However, for the HSO, section 40-88, HRS, indicates that there is a "Honolulu Symphony Trust" and the State of Hawaii Endowment Fund with funding through the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts: "There shall be established as a separate fund of the Honolulu symphony trust created by the trust agreement dated December 5, 1986, a fund to be known as the State of Hawaii endowment fund. The income and capital gains from the \$2,000,000 contributed by the State of Hawaii shall be transferred on a quarterly basis to the state foundation on culture and the arts, performing and visual arts events private contribution account to be used for the production of music by an Oahu-based symphony orchestra as determined by the state foundation on culture and the arts." Since the State Foundation of Culture and the Arts is already transferring the income and capital gains from the State of Hawaii Endowment Fund to the HSO, we suggest that the Legislature consider appropriating additional funding to the State of Hawaii Endowment Fund whose income and capital gains could then be used for the HSO.

To effectuate this suggestion, we suggest the following section be added to the bill:

"SECTION . There is appropriated out of the general revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$_____ or so much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2025-2026, for deposit into the State of Hawaii Endowment Fund.

The sum appropriated shall be expended by the department of accounting and general services for the purposes of this Act."

To facilitate the public's understanding of what the Legislature is trying to accomplish regarding providing public funding for the HSO, we recommend that a findings and purpose section be included in the bill outlining the history of the HSO, the support that the HSO has received from the State of Hawaii Endowment Fund, and the public benefits that have accrued from its existence.

2. Chapter 42F Exemptions for Nonprofits Other than the HSO are Constitutionally Problematic

We note that granting chapter 42F exemptions to nonprofits other than the HSO is likely to violate article VII, section 4, of the Hawaii Constitution. This is because such nonprofits do not share the same State-established heritage as the HSO. The HSO's unique historical connection to the State gives it a special status that other organizations cannot claim, making exemptions for those other entities constitutionally problematic.

We respectfully ask the Committee to consider our comments.

SB-441

Submitted on: 2/8/2025 5:44:48 PM

Testimony for TCA on 2/11/2025 3:01:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Joshua Nakazawa	Testifying for Hawaii Symphony Orchestra	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

The Hawai'i Symphony Orchestra is an integral part of our community and a glue that holds hundreds of musicians in our community together. The vast community of musicians that perform in all genres affect the way we communicate, story tell, form bonds and decisions together through meaningful expression. I hope that supporting this bill will support unifying more of our community together and enhance communication, aritstry, and positivity throughout the Hawaiian Islands.

SB-441

Submitted on: 2/9/2025 10:50:34 PM

Testimony for TCA on 2/11/2025 3:01:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Merle Bratlie	Testifying for Hawaii Symphony Orchestra	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

It is my honor and privilege to have served as the General Manager of the Hawai'i Symphony Orchestra for the past 10 years. I moved to Hawai'i to take this job. What attracted me about the position was the high caliber of performance of the musicians, the commitment securing top international conductors and soloists to work with the organization, the long history, tradition and sense of inclusion. The first year I was here the orchestra had received a state grant to support touring to other island. We traveled to Maui twice, Big Island once and Kauai once. In Maui we performed at the MAC with Korean soprano Sumi Jo, pianist Joyce Yang, On Big island we performed in Waimea to a sold out performance with our Artistic Advisor JoAnn Falletta. Part of the challenge was securing instruments that don't travel easily. After a few telephone calls, I learned that one of the high schools there had recently purchased a new set of timpani drums I was nervous asking the principal of the school who responded that he thought their timpani would really enjoy being played by the Hawai'i Symphony Orchestra. It was wonderful how supportive this gesture was. In Kauai, we arrived in a downpour of rain, we were anxious that we may not get an audience but people braved the weather and we had a full house for a concert with guest conductor Michael Stein and Cliburn Gold Medalist Alexander Kobrin. Early on we committed to performing all of the Harry Potter movies



Randy Perreira
President

HAWAII STATE AFL-CIO

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The Thirty-Third Legislature
House of Representatives
Committee on Transportation and Culture and The Arts

Testimony by
Hawaii State AFL-CIO

February 11, 2025

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SB441 – RELATING TO THE HAWAII SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

Chair Lee, Vice Chair Inouye, and members of the committee:

We are in support of SB441 because it recognizes the cultural and economic contributions of the Hawaii Symphony Orchestra and provides essential funding for its operations. The symphony plays a vital role in arts education, community engagement, and workforce opportunities for musicians, stagehands, and other professionals in the performing arts.

A strong symphony benefits the economy by creating stable jobs in the arts and attracting visitors who contribute to Hawaii's tourism industry. Public investment in the orchestra supports working families in the arts sector and helps sustain a vital cultural institution that has served Hawaii for generations.

We respectfully urge the committee to pass this measure to strengthen Hawaii's arts community and support the workers who bring music and culture to our state.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Randy Perreira".

Randy Perreira
President



IATSE LOCAL 665

FILM, TELEVISION, STAGE, PROJECTION AND TRADESHOWS
Since 1937



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

Thirty-Third Legislature, State of Hawai'i
Regular Session of 2025
Senate Committee on Transportation and Culture and the Arts
Testimony by IATSE 665
February 11th, 2025

SB441 - RELATING TO THE HAWAII SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

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

My name is Tuia'ana Scanlan, IATSE International Trustee and President of IATSE Local 665, the union representing technicians and artisans in the entertainment industry in Hawai'i. **IATSE 665 strongly supports SB441**, relating to the Hawai'i Symphony Orchestra.

The Hawai'i Symphony Orchestra is an essential piece of the tapestry of arts in Hawai'i. Founded in 1900, The symphony hosts shows and programs featuring musicians and performing artists from around the world, in addition to promoting local talent within Hawaii. Designating the Hawai'i Symphony Orchestra as the "State of Hawai'i Symphony Orchestra" will enable HSO to regularly obtain state funds to help cover its general operating costs. Our organizations have been working together for decades. We have supported them with the seasoned technical professionals necessary for their performances for many years and we are happy to support them in this initiative as well.

IATSE 665 strongly supports SB441. We urge your committee to do the same. Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

In Solidarity,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Tuia'ana Scanlan'.

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

Musicians' Association of Hawai'i

LOCAL No. 677, American Federation of Musicians

JIM MOFFITT
President

STEVE FLANTER
Vice President

ROBERT SHINODA
Secretary-Treasurer



February 10, 2025

Aloha.

I strongly urge support for SB 441 which would officially designate the Hawaii Symphony Orchestra the State Orchestra of Hawaii.

This bill would allocate funding to allow the HSO to continue to provide and expand on providing over 50 diverse concerts annually, free Park and Community concerts, free Education concerts including sending smaller numbers of musicians into classrooms to work one on one with students, side by side productions with the Hawaii Youth Symphony students, Masterworks concerts where the HSO presents the world's greatest artists and the HAPA series where the HSO works with Hawaii's most revered musicians.

The HSO is the State's largest employer of professional, Union musicians, who are some of the finest musicians in the country.

Sincerely,

James F. Moffit

President



TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SB441, RELATING TO THE HAWAII SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

SENATE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND CULTURE AND THE ARTS
February 11, 2025

Aloha Chair Lee, Vice Chair Inouye, and Members of the Transportation & Culture & the Arts committee:

The Democratic Party of Hawai'i **SUPPORTS** SB441, RELATING TO THE HAWAII SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA. Pursuant to the Platform of the Democratic Party of Hawai'i, the Party supports public funding going towards the arts, artists, arts education and cultural organizations and initiatives. The Hawaii Symphony Orchestra is a gift to our communities and schools.

The Democratic Party of Hawaii supports designating the Hawaii Symphony Orchestra as the State of Hawaii Symphony Orchestra. This designation will allow the state to further support the Symphony and its musicians, giving it the assistance it needs, including with funding to continue its work of educating and entertaining the people of Hawaii.

Mahalo nui loa for the opportunity to testify in Support of SB441, RELATING TO THE HAWAII SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA. Should you have any questions or require further information, please contact the Democratic Party of Hawai'i at legislation@hawaiidemocrats.org.

SB-441

Submitted on: 2/7/2025 9:17:25 PM

Testimony for TCA on 2/11/2025 3:01:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Michael Golojuch, Jr. (he/him)	Testifying for Pride at Work – Hawai‘i	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Senators,

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

Pride at Work – Hawai‘i fully supports SB 441.

We ask that you support this needed piece of legislation.

Mahalo,

Michael Golojuch, Jr. (he/him)
President
[Pride at Work – Hawai‘i](#)

LATE

SB-441

Submitted on: 2/10/2025 11:18:05 PM
Testimony for TCA on 2/11/2025 3:01:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Amy Iwano	Testifying for Hawai'i Symphony Orchestra	Support	In Person

Comments:

My name is Amy Iwano, and I write today in strong support of **SB441**, which would designate the Hawai'i Symphony Orchestra as the official State of Hawai'i Symphony Orchestra. This designation is not just symbolic—it would provide essential funding to ensure **equal access to world-class symphonic music for all residents, regardless of where they live.**

The Problem:

Right now, **many communities—especially on the neighbor islands and in underserved areas—have little to no access to live symphonic music.** Music education opportunities are also unevenly distributed, despite clear evidence linking exposure to the arts with improved academic and social outcomes.

The Solution:

SB441 would allow the Hawai'i Symphony Orchestra to:

- Expand free public concerts statewide**
- Enhance music education for thousands of Hawai'i's keiki**
- Support local musicians and cultural collaborations**
- Commission new works that reflect Hawai'i's unique heritage**

The Impact:

The **Hawai'i Symphony Orchestra** is a **cultural and economic asset**, supporting local jobs, driving tourism, and strengthening our communities through music. With funding from SB441, HSO could **reach more people in every county**—making the arts accessible to all throughout the islands.

We urge you to **pass SB441** and help make symphonic music a lasting and meaningful part of life for all Hawai'i residents.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.

Amy Iwano

President & CEO, Hawai'i Symphony Orchestra

LATE

SB-441

Submitted on: 2/10/2025 10:54:25 PM

Testimony for TCA on 2/11/2025 3:01:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Nelly Kovalev	Testifying for Hawaii Symphony Orchestra	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

As a member of HSO I get an incredible amount of pride in working for an arts organization that brings so much beauty and world class art the community of Oahu. It gives me purpose and fulfillment in knowing how much positivity we bring to this island. Concert goers thank us for bringing joy and hope into their worlds and young kids say we inspire them to work hard.

Friends from other islands constantly ask if HSO will ever come to perform on their island. I so wish I could say yes. We all do.

SB 441 would help make that possible.

Please help us become the State Orchestra of Hawai'i so we can bring this incredible art form to all of Hawai'i.

LATE

SB-441

Submitted on: 2/11/2025 7:21:21 AM

Testimony for TCA on 2/11/2025 3:01:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Philip Gottling	Testifying for Hawaii Symphony	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha, I joined the Honolulu Symphony in 1986 and was deeply impressed by the statewide outreach the orchestra provided at that time. We did four tours a year, to Hilo, Kona, Maui and Kauai. These regular tours ended in the early 90s, the Honolulu Symphony declared bankruptcy and the Hawai'i Symphony arose in its place. I am still a proud member, in my 39th season.

I am asking you to pass SR441 which will support the Hawai'i Symphony's outreach activities, to include a resumption of tours to the other islands. The Hawai'i Symphony should be known as the symphony orchestra for all of Hawai'i, and with your support I am confident that we will be.

Mahalo Nui Loa!

LATE

SB-441

Submitted on: 2/11/2025 11:39:06 AM

Testimony for TCA on 2/11/2025 3:01:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Dane Lam	Testifying for Hawai' Symphony Orchestra	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

The Hawai'i Symphony Orchestra is the leading performing arts organization in the state of Hawai'i, providing the gift of music to thousands of people of all ages and backgrounds across the islands.

HSO performs more than 50 concerts per year, from free outdoor concerts, Keiki concerts, HapaSymphony with Hawaii's greatest artists, to Masterworks with the best of world talent. HSO serves our community through the provision of these concerts, side by side concerts with youth, pit services for Hawaii Opera Theatre and Ballet Hawaii, and free live streams to neighbour islands. Moreover, HSO provides a base of employment for musicians of the highest international calibre to live in Hawai'i and to teach our keiki.

With state designation and funding, HSO can reach more Keiki, more people who need music more than ever.

LATE

SB-441

Submitted on: 2/11/2025 1:48:01 PM

Testimony for TCA on 2/11/2025 3:01:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Gregory Dunn	Testifying for Hawaii Theatre Center	Support	In Person

Comments:

The Hawai'i Symphony Orchestra is the company in residenc and the artistic partners of the Hawaii Theatre Center. Due to the imporantance of supporting the Symphony as a critical thread in the cultural fabric of our state, the Theatre underwrites the use of the Theatre facility by nearly \$300,000 each year. Without this level of support, the Symphony would not be able to perform at the Theatre, and tens of thousands of patrons would not have the opporunity to attend these performances. The Hawaii Theatre is fully supportive of this measure, and would encourage the legislature to provide critical operating support for the Symphony. With Aloha, Gregory Dunn, President & CEO, Hawaii Theatre Center

SB-441

Submitted on: 2/7/2025 9:38:30 PM

Testimony for TCA on 2/11/2025 3:01:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Mike Golojuch, Sr.	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support SB441. Please pass this bill.

Mike Golojuch, Sr.

SB-441

Submitted on: 2/8/2025 3:48:33 PM

Testimony for TCA on 2/11/2025 3:01:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Renante Lasala	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

The Hawaii Symphony(HSO) has been an integral part of my life as I transitioned from 28 years of military active service to retirement. The variety of music they performed live from classical to theater, and to rock and roll soothes my love of music, as I watch and listen to the HSO magnificently fills the air with awesomeness and excitement. I wholeheartedly support the HSO year after year and I will continue to do so for the next 100 years. I highly encourage everyone else to support SB441 to provide state funding to the HSO organization as they are instrumental to the State of Hawaii and City of Honolulu. The musical services they provide to the community is priceless!

Sincerely,

Mr Renante Lasala

SB-441

Submitted on: 2/9/2025 8:17:27 PM

Testimony for TCA on 2/11/2025 3:01:00 PM

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

Comments:

Aloha,

My name is David Nakazono, and I am honored to serve as the Principal Trumpet of the Hawai‘i Symphony Orchestra (HSO). I submit this testimony in strong support of SB441, which would designate the HSO as the official State Orchestra of Hawai‘i.

Right now, the HSO is in the midst of a Beethoven Festival, performing all nine of Beethoven’s symphonies. For me, Beethoven represents the highest ideal of what music can offer to society. He was a composer who suffered greatly—losing his hearing as a performer and composer—yet his music reflects both the depths of despair and the triumph of the human spirit. Beethoven had every reason to give up, but instead, he wrote music that is transcendent, uplifting, and deeply human.

I believe this is the true value of classical music: it inspires people to look upward, to aim higher, and to transcend suffering. It reminds us that even in hardship, there is beauty to be found and joy to be created.

The HSO embodies this same spirit, bringing music to communities across Hawai‘i in ways that enrich, educate, and uplift. As a musician, I’ve seen firsthand how a single concert can transform an audience—whether it’s a young student hearing a live symphony for the first time, an elder reconnecting with cherished memories, or a family simply taking in the beauty of live music together.

Beyond performances, the HSO is committed to education and community outreach, through:

- Free concerts in parks and public spaces, ensuring access to live music for all.
- Symphony of the Hawaiian Birds and Symphony of the Hawai‘i Forests, which teach students about music and the natural world.
- Side-by-side mentorship programs with young musicians in Hawai‘i.
- Collaborations with legendary local artists like Robert Cazimero and Jake Shimabukuro, blending symphonic music with Hawai‘i’s rich musical traditions.

Recognizing the HSO as the official State Orchestra would secure the resources we need to continue this work. It would affirm that the State of Hawai'i values art, culture, and the transformative power of music.

I urge you to support SB441—not just for the musicians of the HSO, but for the people of Hawai'i who deserve an orchestra that inspires, educates, and unites.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.

David Nakazono

Principal Trumpet, Hawai'i Symphony Orchestra

SB-441

Submitted on: 2/9/2025 11:41:55 PM

Testimony for TCA on 2/11/2025 3:01:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Norman F. Foster	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support SB441 with all my heart. The Hawaii Symphony, of which I have been a dedicated member for nearly 40 years, has earned and deserves the recognition and strong support this bill would bring.

The Symphony benefits our community in many important ways. It provides a wide variety of performances and educates our young musical talent. As an arts organization, it is an essential part of the local economy, providing many jobs directly as well as indirectly through the ripple effect. The organization brings together many different segments of the community in various collaborative projects. It is also a reflection of the rich and unique culture of Hawaii in a way that no other organization can. It is made up of professional musicians who are active in the community in many beneficial ways beyond playing for the Symphony, such as playing chamber music, jazz and other music styles, as well as providing private music lessons.

I remember when the Symphony was a 42-week season and toured the neighbor islands every season, presenting full orchestra concerts and small ensemble educational programs in schools. I hope that this bill will help us be able to expand our season and return to regular touring, fulfilling our mission of serving the entire state.

Again, I strongly support SB441 and I hope that this will help ensure the future of the HSO for years to come.

Norm Foster, Second/E-flat Clarinet, Hawaii Symphony

SB-441

Submitted on: 2/10/2025 2:27:32 PM

Testimony for TCA on 2/11/2025 3:01:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Victor K. Ramos	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I SUPPORT this bill.

SB-441

Submitted on: 2/10/2025 4:13:53 PM

Testimony for TCA on 2/11/2025 3:01:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Autumn Woods	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

I am writing in strong support of SB441, which would designate the Hawai‘i Symphony Orchestra (HSO) as the “State of Hawai‘i Symphony Orchestra’ and provide funding for its operations. As both a longtime patron and a new member of the HSO team, I have witnessed firsthand the transformative impact of this organization on our community.

My connection to the HSO began in 2020 when our family was able to stream the concerts during Covid. We were so impressed with the musicianship, we quickly became subscribers to the Masterworks series in 2021. Attending concerts with my family, especially my daughter, has been an invaluable way to share the power of symphonic music. As a young musician in school, it was important to me to encourage her engagement not just as a listener, but as someone who could experience music up close—meeting professional musicians, witnessing their artistry, and understanding their role in our cultural fabric.

The HSO provided her with unparalleled opportunities to deepen this connection. She had the once-in-a-lifetime experience of conducting the orchestra at a concert at the Waikīkī Shell and later interned with the HSO for a school project. She continued her involvement as a volunteer after graduating high school, and today, she is pursuing music as part of her college studies.

The impact of the HSO extends far beyond its concert hall. The orchestra’s musicians are not just world-class performers - they are dedicated educators who enrich our schools, mentor young artists, and foster a lifelong love of music across generations. The HSO serves as a cultural pillar of Hawai‘i, uniting our diverse communities through music and ensuring that our islands remain a place where the arts can thrive.

It is with this deep appreciation for the HSO’s role in Hawai‘i’s artistic and educational landscape that I felt compelled to join its staff. I believe that the success of this organization is critical to our state - not only for the preservation and promotion of the arts but for the enrichment of all who live here.

I urge you to support SB441 and invest in the future of the Hawai‘i Symphony Orchestra, so that it may continue to inspire, educate, and connect our community for generations to come.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,
Autumn Woods
Associate Director of Advancement
Hawai'i Symphony Orchestra

SB-441

Submitted on: 2/10/2025 4:18:26 PM

Testimony for TCA on 2/11/2025 3:01:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Anna Lenhart	Individual	Support	In Person

Comments:

Aloha, my name is Anna Lenhart. I am the Principal Horn of the Hawai'i Symphony Orchestra. For the past 20 years, I've studied and performed at world renowned music festivals and training orchestras. I have a masters degree from the University of Southern California. I represent the top 1% of horn players in the world. And last year, my salary from the Hawai'i Symphony Orchestra was \$26,000.

Why would anyone with my resume stay in such a low paying job?

Because Hawai'i deserves world class musicians.

When you fund the Hawai'i Symphony, you're not just subsidizing an occasional classical music concert. You are providing the state with professional musicians. You are providing private music teachers for your children. You are providing band and orchestra teachers for your schools. You are providing free chamber music concerts for your kupuna and keiki. You are providing soul-soothing music in parks, libraries, and community centers.

Right now, we musicians are only able to reach a small portion of the state. With our limited resources, we can't provide our music and skills to everyone who wants it.

In October 2023, a donor provided the funds to send small groups of symphony musicians to schools around O'ahu. My group went to Manana Elementary School. We showed the students how our instruments worked and then helped them make instruments out of common household materials. It was a wonderful experience for everyone involved.

In 2024, Manana Elementary asked if we could come again. Unfortunately, there was no funding for educational outreach that year.

I never want to say no to someone asking for music.

SB441 will enable us musicians to not only stay in Hawai'i but to expand our influence to underserved communities and neighbor islands.

Everyone deserves the healing power of music.

SB-441

Submitted on: 2/10/2025 7:22:11 PM

Testimony for TCA on 2/11/2025 3:01:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Barney Brennan	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

Please join me in supporting SB441!

The Hawaii Symphony Orchestra is an incredible source of education, inspiration, and joy for our community. I have had the pleasure of interacting with the organization as a parent, volunteer, and donor and have been extremely impressed with the goals and motivations of the organization.

My daughter was involved in the Hawaii Youth Symphony and had the opportunity to interact with the very skilled and welcoming staff and musicians of the HSO. She was so moved by her experience that she created an internship with the team as a high school senior project and has stayed connected, returning to volunteer over summer and college breaks. She has been supported and encouraged to grow her passion for music and has had the benefit of taking lessons from HSO musicians. She has met and had meaningful interactions with visiting international artists here to perform with the HSO. Truly amazing opportunities that would have never existed without the HSO. She is now a music focused college student playing in chamber, wind, and baroque ensembles.

As a volunteer, I have been able to witness first-hand the motivations and passion of this organization and their commitment to our community. They refer to the the HSO as "your Hawaii Symphony", and they are stewards that respect the responsibility of providing world class art and entertainment for the community. We are so fortunate to have a team that has the vision to be a Pacific force for the advancement of symphonic music and incorporating the authentic voices of our island nations in their Hapa Series of collaborations. They are cultural leaders and positive representatives that deserve the honor of being the State Orchestra of Hawaii.

My family is proud to support the HSO as we can afford, and work to share the joy of the performance experience with our friends and co-workers. Seeing what the HSO is able to achieve with current resources just makes me so excited to think of the possiblites with the support of the Hawaii Legislature.

Please join me in supporting SB 441 and the Hawaii Symphony Orchestra...truly deserving of becoming YOUR State Orchestra of Hawaii!!

SB-441

Submitted on: 2/10/2025 7:50:24 PM

Testimony for TCA on 2/11/2025 3:01:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Sitarani Crevier	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Thank you, Honorable Chair Tommy Waters, Vice Chair Matt Weyer and the Committee for your support of arts and culture in Hawai‘i. I strongly support SB441, which would officially and appropriately designate the Hawai‘i Symphony Orchestra as the State Orchestra of Hawai‘i and provide essential funding to expand its reach.

The mission of the Hawai‘i Symphony Orchestra is to inspire and connect our communities through the power of symphonic music. Each year, HSO presents over 50 diverse concerts, from free park performances to educational programs, ensuring that music is accessible to audiences across our state.

With the passing of SB441, the Hawai‘i Symphony Orchestra will be able to continue delivering programs that benefit Hawai‘i’s students, families and communities. Increased funding would allow HSO to expand its free education concerts, such as Symphony of the Hawaiian Birds and Symphony of the Hawai‘i Forests, which introduce thousands of young students to orchestral music in an engaging and culturally meaningful way. These initiatives foster creativity and inspire the next generation of musicians and arts supporters.

I have personally seen how HSO’s programs unite people of all backgrounds. The orchestra’s HapaSymphony Series showcases the unique musical heritage of Hawai‘i by blending symphonic music with the talents of beloved local artists like Jake Shimabukuro and Robert Cazimero. These concerts celebrate our islands’ rich cultural landscape and demonstrate the orchestra’s role as a bridge between tradition and innovation.

SB441 is an investment in the future of the arts in Hawai‘i. By securing this designation and funding, we ensure that HSO can continue serving as a cornerstone of our cultural community, reaching more residents across all islands. I respectfully urge you to support SB441 and help keep symphonic music thriving in Hawai‘i.

Mahalo for your attention and consideration,
Sitarani Crevier

LATE

SB-441

Submitted on: 2/10/2025 10:56:33 PM

Testimony for TCA on 2/11/2025 3:01:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kristen Gagnon	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

The Hawai'i orchestra is amazing! The community lives v the music! I want it to grow and teach youth! Im

and advocate for music education, and I believe music is so important for our state.

Kristen Gagnon

LATE

SB-441

Submitted on: 2/10/2025 11:24:43 PM
Testimony for TCA on 2/11/2025 3:01:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Martha Nakajima	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I have been a season ticket holder and volunteer for the Hawaii Symphony Orchestra for more than 10 years. It's a wonderful professional ensemble composed of outstanding musicians who in addition to their jobs with the orchestra are the backbone of instrumental music teaching in the Honolulu area. We are exceptionally fortunate to have classical music of this quality in this remote location. It's a miracle.

LATE

SB-441

Submitted on: 2/11/2025 7:12:20 AM

Testimony for TCA on 2/11/2025 3:01:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Tyler Ralston	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dear Chair Lee and the Committee on Transportation and Culture and The Arts,

I write to ask that you please support SB 441. Designating Hawaii Symphony Orchestra as the State of Hawaii Symphony Orchestra will allow much needed funds to support the Symphony Orchestra and represent Hawai'i on a much higher level. Culture and the Arts are incredibly important, and yet often under recognized for their value to our communities and State, and as such often underfunded. Supporting SB 441 is a necessary and valuable step toward bolstering the diverse cultural and artistic fabric of our State.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Tyler Ralston

LATE

SB-441

Submitted on: 2/11/2025 7:55:15 AM

Testimony for TCA on 2/11/2025 3:01:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Rucci Aamodt	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Music in the community is very important for families, especially those with young children. Music is a valuable part of life and is everywhere, so it should be easily accessible to everyone. Music brings people together and creates emotional and psychological connections. Music can also create gaps between cultures. It is also a good way to preserve history, teach about quality music that has been around for a very long time while being performed by excellent musicians.

LATE

SB-441

Submitted on: 2/11/2025 9:22:10 AM

Testimony for TCA on 2/11/2025 3:01:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
ginny tiu	Individual	Support	In Person

Comments:

Thank you so much for your consideration to support SB441. I have personally experienced the power of music, and see the positive impact it has in our community and beyond. The Hawaii Symphony Orchestra is such an asset to our beautiful state.

Mahalo nui and aloha,

Ginny Tiu

LATE

SB-441

Submitted on: 2/11/2025 9:29:57 AM

Testimony for TCA on 2/11/2025 3:01:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
JEFFREY LIM, M.D.	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

The Hawaii Symphony Orchestra (HSO) provides the Hawaii community with more than the opportunity to experience live the vast tapestry of the symphonic repertoire. This organization provides essential outreach and educational opportunities that have cultural impact across the spectrum of our State's demographics. Its Hapa Concert Series has broad appeal, with its support and showcasing of premiere local talent and culture. Through its Na Hoku Opio youth competition, HSO encourages instrumental excellence in Hawaii's young musicians and the once-in-a-lifetime thrill of performing with and being supported by a full orchestra. My son benefitted from this experience and it played an integral role in his life journey toward his current position as violinist with HSO. But I believe perhaps the most important benefit of HSO are the body of excellent musicians it assembles permanently in the islands. The individual impact of each of these musicians through their teaching and educational efforts, inspiring performances, and the musical experimentation and curiosity they promote throughout our community is priceless

LATE

SB-441

Submitted on: 2/11/2025 10:47:12 AM

Testimony for TCA on 2/11/2025 3:01:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Layla Gagnon	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

As we stand on the cusp of an exciting new era, with the Beethoven Festival lighting up Hawai'i, the passing of SB441 would be transformative for HSO as an organization and would enable us to continue to deliver on our mission of bringing the power of symphonic music all around our great state

LATE

SB-441

Submitted on: 2/11/2025 11:01:06 AM

Testimony for TCA on 2/11/2025 3:01:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Alexander F Kufel	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

The Hawaii Symphony Orchestra fills an important part of my life by providing a varied program of classical and contemporary live music that satisfies my senses and enriches my life in a way that no other medium can do. The orchestra itself is made up of gifted and talented musicians, each of whom could provide an outstanding solo performance, as well as the innovative leadership of Dane Lam and the remarkable composer in residence Michael Thomas Foumai. Taken together they create a sound that is among the finest possible by anyone, anywhere. In these transitional times where so much is virtual rather than real the orchestra deserves the full support of not only Hawaii's citizens but of the State itself. Recognition as the State of Hawaii Orchestra will help secure its future and is the honor it deserves. Sincerely, Alexander Kufel

LATE

SB-441

Submitted on: 2/11/2025 1:00:48 PM

Testimony for TCA on 2/11/2025 3:01:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Pat Hendrickson	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

We had the pleasure of attending the symphony when we visited Honolulu. It was a highlight of our trip! I strongly urge your support for this bill, as I believe, now more than ever, we all need good music in our lives. Your symphony certainly fills that need. It also adds to the wonderful things tourists can experience on Oahu.