

TESTIMONY OF
LORI V. THOMAS

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON TOURISM,
CULTURE, AND INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS
ON

February 7, 2009

H. B. 1224

RELATING TO WORKS OF ART SPECIAL FUND

Chair Manahan and members of the committee, I am Lori Thomas, chairperson of the Hawaii State Foundation on Culture and the Arts and I am testifying today as an individual. Thank you for the opportunity to testify before you on H. B. 1224, which I oppose..

The State Foundation on Culture and the Arts (SFCA) was established as Hawaii's state arts agency in 1965. An intrinsic part of its development was the creation of the 1% for art in 1967, followed by the Works of Art Special Fund in 1989. The SFCA has served as a model for other state arts agencies in the nation, most notably for its stellar work in art in public places and the Hawaii State Art Museum

Therefore, I strongly oppose this measure, which proposes to suspend the 1% appropriation until 06/30/11 and transfer unexpended and unencumbered funds for capital improvement projects. Ratifying this legislation will eliminate the Art in Public Places Program and the Hawaii State Art Museum; the long history of public art in Hawaii; the Art in Public Places Program's presence as a vanguard for public and contemporary local art; the economic vitality it brings to the state; its

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many fine educational and cultural programs; its fine art collection; and most of all its presence as government's investment in the creativity and vision of its people.

The SFCA receives an average of \$2.8 million each year in 1% revenues. The Works of Art Special Fund has always been carefully managed and the Art in Public Places Program has developed dramatically as a result of competent leadership and public interest in and support of the State Art Collection. The SFCA itself could not survive without its 1% appropriation as more than half of its staff, including all of its administration, is funded, at least in part, with Special funds.

I urge you to reconsider the detrimental impact of this proposed legislation.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this matter.