



SB283
RELATING TO THE HAWAII TOURISM AUTHORITY
Committee on Tourism and International Affairs

February 4, 2015

2:45 p.m.

Room 225

The Administration of the Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA) will recommend a position of **COMMENTS** for SB283, which seeks to clarify the qualifications of the Hawai'i Tourism Authority's (HTA's) Board of Directors, and amends language relating to the board member with a Hawaiian cultural background.

OHA notes that currently, the HTA Board of Directors is required to have "at least one" member with Hawaiian cultural knowledge, experience, and expertise. SB283 amends this language to simply state that "one member" of the board shall have Hawaiian cultural knowledge, background, and expertise. This wording change may suggest that the HTA board is limited to having only one member representing the Hawaiian culture. Given the importance of Hawaiian culture to the mission of the Authority, OHA believes that it may be more prudent to retain language stating that "at least one" member of the board shall have such cultural qualifications, rather than creating an ambiguity that may limit cultural representation on the HTA board. If a cultural expert also has knowledge, experience, and expertise as required to serve on the HTA, they should not be eliminated just because they are a cultural expert.

Mahalo nui for the opportunity to testify on this measure.



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David Y. Ige
Governor

Ronald Williams
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Testimony of
Ronald Williams
President and Chief Executive Officer
Hawai'i Tourism Authority
on
S.B. No. 283
Relating to the Hawaii Tourism Authority
Senate Committee on Tourism and International Affairs
Wednesday, February 4, 2015
2:45 a.m.
Conference Room 225

The Hawaii Tourism Authority strongly supports S.B. No. 283, which proposes to clarify the law relating to the membership of the Board of Directors of the Hawaii Tourism Authority.

Membership qualifications

Currently, section 201B-2, Hawaii Revised Statutes, among other requirements:

- (1) Establishes a 12-member policy-making board of directors of the Hawaii Tourism Authority;
- (2) Provides that three members are to be appointed by the Senate President, three members are to be appointed by the Speaker of the House, and the rest of the members appointed by the Governor; it requires the Senate President and House Speaker to submit three names for each appointment;
- (3) Requires that at least six members have knowledge, experience, and expertise in visitor industry management, marketing, promotion; transportation; retail; entertainment or visitor attractions; and requires one member to have knowledge, experience, and expertise in Hawaiian cultural practices; and
- (4) Provides that each member shall hold office until the member's successor is appointed and qualified.

S.B. 283 clarifies the descriptions of the required qualification by amending the "visitor industry management, marketing, promotion" to "accommodations," which, as used in the industry embraces the management, promotion, and marketing of facilities. It further requires that the governor appointment the member with the expertise in

Hawaiian cultural practices. The bill requires the governor to notify the Senate President and House Speaker of the qualifications and any county residency requirement for the nominees to be submitted.

Hold-over members

Act 156, Session Laws of Hawaii 1998, which established the Hawaii Tourism Authority, provided that:

“...Each public member shall hold office until the member’s successor is appointed and qualified. Section 26-34 shall be applicable insofar as it relates to the number of terms and consecutive number of years a member may serve on the board.”

Section 26-34, HRS, relating to selection and terms of members of boards and commissions, provides:

“(a) ...***Unless otherwise provided*** by this chapter or ***by law*** hereafter enacted, the terms of the members shall be for four years. ...No person shall be appointed consecutively to more than two terms as a member of the same board or commission; provided that membership on any board or commission shall not exceed eight consecutive years.”

S.B. 283 clarifies that, “notwithstanding section 26-34,” a member shall hold office until the member’s successor is appointed and qualified.

For these reasons, we strongly support S.B. 283, and recommend its passage.

Mahalo for the opportunity to present these comments.