



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

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Statement of  
**JAMES KUNANE TOKIOKA**  
Director

Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism  
before the

**SENATE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION, CULTURE AND THE ARTS**

Tuesday, March 19, 2024  
3:00 PM  
State Capitol, Conference Room 224

In consideration of  
**HB 1939 HD1**  
**RELATING TO THE ARTS.**

Chair Lee, Vice Chair Inouye and members of the Committee. The Department of Business, Economic Development and Tourism (DBEDT) supports HB 1939 HD1 that appropriates funds to the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts (SFCA) to establish a statewide arts program, providing greater access to the arts for children and communities in need, with a focus on those affected by the Maui wildfires.

The music, arts and culture of these islands are the heartbeat of Hawai'i. The arts can be beneficial in helping affected communities move toward recovery. This is of particular importance given the devastation experienced by our keiki and their families in the wildfires of 2023.

Existing outreach programs in Arts Education and related initiatives of the SFCA can bring arts-based healing and self-expressive activities for our youth through drawing, writing, music-making, and dance into their recovery work. With community health practitioner alliances in Maui County, this initiative for young survivors to safely process their experiences can be instrumental in their healing process.

DBEDT and its Creative Industries Division support HB1939 HD1 and would welcome the opportunity to collaborate with SFCA, where needed, to initiate this effort.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.



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**Testimony of KAREN EWALD, Executive Director  
State Foundation on Culture and the Arts  
to the  
SENATE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND CULTURE AND THE ARTS  
TUESDAY, MARCH 19, 2024 Conference Room 224 at 3:00PM**

**HOUSE BILL 1939 H.D.1  
RELATING TO THE ARTS**

Dear Chair Lee and members of the Committee,

The State Foundation on Culture and the Arts (SFCA) respectfully **SUPPORTS** H.B. 1939 HD1 which appropriates funds to the SFCA to provide greater access to the arts for children and communities in need, with a focus on those affected by the Maui wildfires.

State Arts Agencies play an important role in traumatic recovery efforts for artists and art programs. Specifically, the SFCA acts as an information provider, identifying funding sources, developing partnerships, and connecting people and resources. The long-term response to mental health is an area where culture and the arts can make a difference. It gives communities a purpose and a unifying rallying point. Culture provides a sense of well-being and helps people cope.

**ARTS Healing**

To date, the SFCA is supporting out-of-school arts engagement activities for those affected by the Maui fires: kupuna, veterans, those experiencing houselessness, rural communities, and other communities of people that may not always have access to arts education experiences. The SFCA has partnered with the Department of Health and Hawai'i Community Foundation to administer arts and healing programming.

The community expectation and demand for funding support through relief support outweighs the staff and funding resources of the SFCA. In order to develop a long-term recovery plan, the SFCA will require additional funding resources to support the Maui culture and arts sector.

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

**HB-1939-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/18/2024 1:01:21 PM

Testimony for TCA on 3/19/2024 3:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Cyan Garma	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am against the defunding of art/creative programs in Hawaii across the board. Art benefits the culture and people in an immeasurable way. If anything there should be more funds/resources for art programs.