



Testimony of KAREN EWALD, Executive Director  
State Foundation on Culture and the Arts to the  
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE  
FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 23, 2024 Conference Room 308 at 11:30AM

HOUSE BILL 1940HD1  
MAKING AN APPROPRIATION  
TO THE STATE FOUNDATION ON CULTURE AND THE ARTS

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

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Karen A. Ewald

Telephone  
808.586.0300

Fax  
808.586.0308

Website  
sfca.hawaii.gov

Dear Chair Yamashita and members of the Committee,

The State Foundation on Culture and the Arts (SFCA) respectfully **SUPPORTS** H.B. 1940HD1 which appropriates funds out of the works of art special fund to the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts for the integration of works of art projects into several major capital improvement projects. H.B. 1940 is a request to increase the appropriation ceiling (recurring base) of the Works of Art Special Fund from \$5,500,000 to \$9,000,000 annually - a \$4,000,000 increase.

The growing cost of State construction has resulted in increased revenue to the works of art special fund. Despite the fund balance growth, the SFCA is unable to address the rising demands of contributing State Departments for culture and arts programs and services because the budget ceiling remains static.

Increasing operational demands on the Works of Art Special Fund include a fund assessment by Budget and Finance, repair and maintenance of the collection, vertical infrastructure projects such as (Washington Place, State Capitol, Civic Centers, NASED, etc.), interpretation of the collection, including the operations and educational programming of the Hawai'i State Art Museum, transporting works of art to neighbor islands, and personnel costs. With a higher budget ceiling, we could meet the statewide demand.

The current ceiling set in 2019 limits the SFCA's ability to fulfill the obligation to carry out the intent of HRS 103-8.5. An increase in the SFCA's budget ceiling would not increase the R&M or CIP budgets of contributing departments but would be drawn from the available fund balance.

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



February 22, 2024

To the House Committee on Finance:

I am writing this letter in strong support of House Bill 1940 (HB1940), which proposes to appropriate funds out of the Works of Art Special Fund to enable the incorporation of works of art projects into the major capital improvement projects that have been planned or are being planned, to be expended by the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts (SFCA). I have witnessed firsthand the vital and significant impacts of SFCA's initiatives, both through my capacity as Director of Maui Arts & Cultural Center's Schaefer International Gallery and as a Maui resident and community member.

Maui Arts & Cultural Center has worked with SFCA on numerous occasions to coordinate Art Acquisition Selection Committee visits that nominate works of art for accession into the Art in Public Places (APP) Collection. This collection plays a vital role in integrating the arts into public spaces throughout the state, providing visibility and recognition for Hawai'i's dynamic artist community and ensuring that these works remain accessible into the future.

Hawai'i's enactment of the Art in State Buildings Law in 1967 and creation of the Works of Art Special Fund in 1989 distinguished the state by signaling the importance of the arts as a necessary element to humanize public space. The proposed appropriation of funds in the sum of \$4,000,000 would significantly increase culture and arts funding statewide through SFCA's various initiatives and programs.

This includes ensuring the longevity of the Art in Public Places Program, which represents an evolving collection that is meant to grow alongside contemporary developments in the art scene. In addition to the APP Collection, the proposed increase in funding from the Works of Art Special Fund would enhance numerous vital initiatives that enable the implementation of arts educational programs throughout the state and provide funding to non-profit organizations. These include but are not limited to the Artists in the Schools program serving 124 public and charter schools; professional development for Department of Education teachers; the Scholastic Art Exhibition and Young Artists of Hawai'i Exhibition; numerous outreach programs to underserved populations; and support for Native Hawaiian and local arts organizations.

I highly support the provisions listed in HB1940 and encourage you to recommend this significant piece of legislation for passage.

Sincerely,

Jonathan Yukio Clark  
Director, Schaefer International Gallery

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www.mauiarts.org

My name is Robert Pollock, executive director of Ebb & Flow Arts in Hawai'i. I strongly support HB 1940 that appropriates funds out of the Works of Art Special Fund to the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts for the integration of works of art projects into several major capital improvement projects. that would add funding for SFCA's Arts programs particularly for Healing.

In 2022, nonprofit arts and culture organizations and their audiences generated \$151.7 billion in economic activity—\$73.3 billion in spending by the organizations, which leveraged an additional \$78.4 billion in event-related spending by their audiences. The impact of this economic activity is far reaching, supporting 2.6 million jobs, generating \$29.1 billion in tax revenue, and providing \$101 billion in personal income to residents. AEP6 (the authoritative Arts and Economic Prosperity Study - <https://www.americansforthearts.org/by-program/reports-and-data/research-studies-publications/arts-economic-prosperity-6>) sends a strong signal that when we support the arts, we are investing in economic and community well-being.

However the Arts are essential in more profound ways than the material, economic, and bureaucratic. Imagination and creativity are uniquely human traits. Through our senses we experience colors, forms, sounds, and motion. We transform these objects of the senses into powerful, emotional, intellectual and healthily creative works. Such activity humanizes us and distinguishes us from the rest of the animal world. Such artistic activity enlivens our spirits and nourishes our soul with its beauty and freedom.

Art has always needed outside support: state, church, aristocratic, foundation, corporate, philanthropic, etc. If a market economy could alone sustain Art, then famous artists such as Dutch painter Vincent Van Gogh, German composer Franz Schubert and American author Herman Melville would have been rich men. But they made little money from their art during their lifetimes.

Art is a survival tool. There are countless stories of survivors from the Holocaust and other disasters who attended concerts or viewed exhibits, or heard a poetry reading that allowed them to enter the realm of Spirit and transcend the horrors of their subjugation. They survived because of Art. We must place the enlivenment of our spirits and nourishment of our souls as high a priority as the necessary sustenance of our bodies. Body is a function of Spirit. The experience of Art transcends and includes the experience of surviving. We must integrate Art into our lives and in all sectors of the society, private, civic and government. If we do not, then the reason for surviving disappears. Art reminds us of the priority of things - of what is most important in life. It pulls us away from the dark, destructive societal forces that create the "death spiral."

**HB-1940-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/22/2024 10:24:32 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/23/2024 11:30:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
diana nicholette jeon	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Support the arts as they deserve to be supported. Approve this bill.

**HB-1940-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/22/2024 11:18:11 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/23/2024 11:30:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Christopher Edwards	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I oppose this bill!

**HB-1940-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/22/2024 11:30:51 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/23/2024 11:30:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Heidi Mehlich	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support.