

TESTIMONY RE: SB3281 RELATING TO CULTURE AND THE ARTS

Good afternoon Chair Lee, Vice Chair Inouye and members of the Committee on Transportation, Culture and the Arts,

My name is Ann Botticelli and I am the chairwoman of the board of directors for Bishop Museum.

On behalf of the board and our staff, I would like to first thank you and your colleagues in the State Legislature for your ongoing support of the Bishop Museum. It has been very helpful in supporting all aspects of our Museum operations — from first class natural science research and scholarship to preserving precious cultural artifacts. It has also helped in our effort to widen the availability of the Museum’s collections beyond O’ahu and even the archipelago of Hawai’i.

We understand and support the intent of this bill, which would ensure that designees from state departments and agencies that work with with the Museum have insight into the progress of the endeavor. . We would welcome such mana’o on our board. However, we respectfully suggest some adjustments to the language in the bill, both for clarity and to ensure maximum flexibility into the future.

- The bill as written refers to the appointment of “ex officio, voting members.” We suggest the bill be revised to refer to clarify that the ex officio member will be non-voting. We currently have ex officio, non-voting members on our board and this would be consistent with our board practice and bylaws.
- We suggest broader language to replace specific departmental designations in P. 5, lines 19 and 20 and P. 6, lines 1-5. With respect, we suggest that P. 5, line 15 through P. 6, line 5 be amended to read:

“... provided that effective July 1, 2024, in order for the designation to remain in effect, the board of directors shall include two ex officio, non-voting members, to be selected by the board representing the Directors or their designees of State of Hawaii Departments.”

We are pleased that this bill does not contain a change to the Bishop Museum’s official designation as the State of Hawai’i Museum of Natural and Cultural History. Such as change is contemplated in a separate measure, SB 3347. That bill inserts the word “Indigenous” into the title. In our view, this creates an artificial boundary around our collection and global mission. Our collection contains vertebrate and invertebrate species from the ocean depths to the mountain tops around the vast Pacific. It contains personal collections that have been entrusted to us for our care. The current designation actually perfectly describes the Museum’s broad, inclusive and world-renown mission.



Mahalo nui loa for the opportunity to testify, and thank you again for your support of our Museum.

Ann Botticelli, Chairwoman
Bishop Museum Board of Directors



February 14, 2024

Dear Chairpersons Lee, Inouye, and committee members,

On behalf of the board of directors and staff of the Donkey Mill Art Center, our 450 members of the organization, and the thousands of Holualoa and West Hawai'i constituents who benefit from our programs, I respectfully present this testimony.

I support SB3281, which establishes oversight, checks and balances, standards and conditions that the State of Hawaii Museum of Natural and Cultural History and State of Hawaii Museum of Monarchy History must meet to receive state funds.

In our 29 year history as an arts and cultural organization of Hawai'i, we have had to abide by all rules, regulations, and laws as required of receiving public funds from agencies like SFCA and other state agencies, and the same should apply to the State of Hawaii Museum of Natural and Cultural History and State of Hawaii Museum of Monarchy History (Bishop Museum and Iolani Palace). I think that the bill's addition of "adding two ex officio, voting members, to be selected from certain state agencies, should be added to the board of directors of each museum ensuring that the operations of the museums are in alignment with the State's vision", is a good idea. It's also good practice and I appreciate the built-in oversight that requires the creation of an annual report and that the comptroller and state auditor shall have the authority to examine the use of funds.

In regards to the annual appropriations to these two private organizations, I would like to call attention to the many cultural and arts organizations statewide that are also custodians of cultural property and traditions. In addition to funding Bishop Museum and Iolani Palace, broad government support for arts and culture organizations statewide would be welcome and have tremendous impact on perpetuating Hawai'i's arts and culture economy. For many organizations, like ourselves, the only broad support from the State of Hawai'i comes as a \$5,000, \$10,000 or \$15,000 grant through SFCA Biennium Grants program. This amount has remained the same for many years, and does not reflect the recent dramatic inflation, and increased costs of doing business. I would strongly urge the legislature to review this possible inequity and increase the amount of funding allowed for other arts and culture organizations across the State who are doing incredible and meaningful work.

Mahalo for this opportunity to support and comment on SB3281.

With gratitude and aloha,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ashley Raymond".

Ashley Raymond
Executive Director
Donkey Mill Art Center, Holualoa, HI
donkeymillartcenter.org

SB-3281

Submitted on: 2/14/2024 12:19:50 PM

Testimony for TCA on 2/15/2024 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Billy Pieper	Testifying for Friends of Iolani Palace	Comments	In Person

Comments:

Before the Senate Committee on

Transportation, Culture & The Arts

February 15, 2024

State Capitol, Conference Room 224 via Video Conference

Regarding: Comments to SB 3281, Relating to Culture and the Arts

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

My name is Billy Pieper, the current board chair for The Friends of ‘Iolani Palace (FOIP). I’m writing to provide comments on SB 3281, Relating to Culture and The Arts. This bill requires that the boards of directors of Bishop Museum, the State of Hawai‘i Museum of Natural and Cultural History, and ‘Iolani Palace, the State of Hawai‘i Museum of Monarchy History, must include two ex officio, voting members, to be selected from certain state agencies. It has other requirements related to the operation of both organizations.

I’d like to speak specifically about ‘Iolani Palace since I feel that is most appropriate in my current capacity. I’m particularly grateful for the renewed commitment from our state government leaders as evidenced by the latest round of resources the state deployed to our organization. I love our Palace and feel that she plays an important role in preserving,

perpetuating and celebrating our history as native Hawaiians. Furthermore, the Palace serves as a beacon for future generations of leaders by providing hope that we are indeed smart, talented and capable people as told through the stories brought to life on our grounds. We cannot continue to fulfill the mission of the Palace without the support of our landlord (the State).

I am also in support of transparency and accountability with the State. I just am not convinced that adding two voting members from the state to our board is necessary. The FOIP Board does an excellent job defining and governing the “ends” for our organization while the FOIP management team has been successful governing and defining the “means” in accomplishing the vision. I would suggest SB3281 be revised to say “ex officio non-voting members.” I believe that would ensure the transparency you seek, with the flexibility our organization needs.

Once again, mahalo for your support.

Me ka ha‘aha‘a,

Billy Pieper

Board Chair Friends of ‘Iolani Palace

SB-3281

Submitted on: 2/14/2024 1:13:31 PM

Testimony for TCA on 2/15/2024 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jody Brotman	Testifying for Kahilu Theatre Foundation	Comments	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

There are many art organizations across the state doing great work that need additional support. We recognize the importance of support for state-owned art and cultural organizations, and we also see the need for a more equitable distribution of funds. There is such a vast difference between the 15K and 7.5M funding to individual organizations. Additionally, the 15K has remained flat, so overtime, its value has diminished. A more equitable distribution of funds to art and cultural organizations statewide could have a profound impact on many people and communities in Hawaii.