



HO'OUULU LĀHUI  
Regenerating Oceania  
13th Festival of Pacific Arts & Culture  
Hawai'i 2024

**Commission on the 13th  
Festival of Pacific Arts &  
Culture**

**Chair**

Kalani Ka'anā'anā  
*Hawai'i Tourism Authority*

**Commissioners**

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*Governor's Designee*

Snowbird Bento

*Community*

Māpuana de Silva

*Community*

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*Office of Hawaiian Affairs*

Sen. Jarrett Keohokālole

*Hawai'i State Senate*

Rep. Richard Onishi

*Hawai'i State House of  
Representatives*

Kēhaulani Pu'u

*City & County of Honolulu*

Chris J. Sadayasu

*Dept. Of Business, Economic  
Development & Tourism*

[festpachawaii.org](http://festpachawaii.org)

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Pacific  
Community  
Communauté  
du Pacifique

Statement of  
**KALANI KA'ANĀ'ANĀ**

Chair of the Commission on the 13th Festival of Pacific Arts & Culture  
before the  
**COMMITTEES ON TRANSPORTATION AND CULTURE AND THE  
ARTS & ENERGY, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TOURISM**

Tuesday, February 14, 2023

1:01 p.m.

State Capitol Conference Room 229 & Videoconference

In consideration of  
**SENATE BILL NO. 449**  
**RELATING TO THE FESTIVAL OF PACIFIC ARTS**

The Commission on the 13th Festival of Pacific Arts & Culture appreciates the opportunity to offer comments in support of SB449, to appropriate funds to the Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism for the Festival of Pacific Arts & Culture to be held in Honolulu June 6-16, 2024.

Hawai'i, home to many different cultures and people, has an opportunity through the 13th Festival of Pacific Arts & Culture to showcase Hawaiian culture as well as the cultures of the various Pacific Island nations and those from around the world who call our islands home.

We, as a state, have the opportunity to use the Festival of Pacific Arts & Culture to position Hawai'i as a premiere host for high-level international gatherings, and a leader in the stewardship of our land and how we interact as a community.

The Commission is honored with the kuleana of planning this festival to showcase and highlight the beauty and splendor of Hawai'i's people and this place.

We would like to propose one correction to SB449: the full name of the festival is the Festival of Pacific Arts & Culture, and request the bill be amended to reflect that name.

We support SB449 and appreciate the opportunity to provide these comments. Mahalo.



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

**JOSH GREEN, M.D.**  
GOVERNOR

**CHRIS J. SADAYASU**  
DIRECTOR

**DANE K. WICKER**  
DEPUTY DIRECTOR

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Statement of  
**CHRIS J. SADAYASU**  
Director  
Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism  
before the  
**SENATE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND CULTURE AND THE ARTS**  
and the  
**SENATE COMMITTEE ON ENERGY, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, AND TOURISM**

Tuesday, February 14, 2023  
1:01 PM  
State Capitol, Conference Room 229

In consideration of  
**SB 449**  
**RELATING TO THE FESTIVAL OF PACIFIC ARTS.**

Chairs Lee and DeCoite, Vice Chairs Inouye and Wakai, and Members of the Committees.

The Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism (DBEDT) **strongly supports** SB 449 relating to the Festival of Pacific Arts which appropriates funds for the planning of the Festival, provided that its passage does not replace or adversely impact the Administration's budget priorities.

Hawaii will host the 13<sup>th</sup> Festival of Pacific Arts for the first time ever. Originally scheduled for June 2020, but cancelled due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the Festival is rescheduled for June 6-16, 2024. This Festival is important as a venue where the indigenous cultures from throughout the Pacific region can be celebrated and perpetuated through the sharing and passing of cultural traditions from one generation to the next.

The Festival is expected to have a significant economic impact, as approximately 2,700 delegates and up to 10,000 visitors comprised of accompanying family and friends, and Pacific cultural scholars and enthusiasts from around the world are anticipated to attend. This could potentially generate \$27 million in direct visitor spending resulting in state tax revenues of \$3.2 million.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide this testimony.



Ke'ena Kuleana Ho'okipa O Hawai'i  
Hawai'i Convention Center  
1801 Kalākaua Avenue, Honolulu, Hawai'i 96815  
**kelepona** tel 808 973 2255  
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**Josh Green, M.D.**  
*Governor*

**John De Fries**  
*President and Chief Executive Officer*

Statement of  
**JOHN DE FRIES**  
Hawai'i Tourism Authority  
before the  
**COMMITTEES ON TRANSPORTATION AND CULTURE AND THE ARTS  
AND  
ENERGY, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TOURISM**

Tuesday, February 14, 2023  
1:01 p.m.  
State Capitol Conference Room 229 & Videoconference

In consideration of  
**SENATE BILL NO. 449**  
**RELATING TO THE FESTIVAL OF PACIFIC ARTS**

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Aloha Chairs Lee and DeCoite, Vice Chairs Inouye and Wakai, and Members of the Committees on Transportation and Culture and the Arts and Energy, Economic Development and Tourism,

The Hawai'i Tourism Authority (HTA) appreciates the opportunity to testify in support of the intent of SB449, to appropriate funds to the Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism for the Thirteenth Festival of Pacific Arts & Culture to be held in Honolulu from June 6 to 16, 2024.

It is an honor for Hawai'i to be selected as the host of this event, the world's largest gathering of indigenous Pacific Islanders which only occurs every four years. Though Hawai'i delegations have participated in the festival since the 1970s, this will be the festival's first time in Hawai'i. In the Hawaiian cultural tradition of ho'okipa, there is a reciprocity associated with the hospitality extended by our fellow Pacific Islanders at festivals hosted in the decades past, so it is important for us to extend the same hospitality to them.

For Hawai'i to host the festival is a monumental opportunity to amplify HTA's four interacting strategic pillars: Natural Resources, Hawaiian Culture, Community, and Branding. With appropriate funding to support the festival, Hawai'i will be able to showcase ourselves as a capable host of high-level international gatherings.

We support SB449 and stand ready to assist in planning and support the Festival of Pacific Arts & Culture as it relates to the implementation of this measure. We further commend the diligent work of the Commission, led by our own Chief Brand Officer Kalani Ka'anā'anā, that brought us to this point.

Mahalo for the opportunity to provide this testimony.



**HAWAI'I**

STATE FOUNDATION on  
CULTURE and the ARTS

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Honolulu, HI 96813

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**TESTIMONY OF THE STATE FOUNDATION ON CULTURE AND THE ARTS  
TO THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND CULTURE AND  
THE ARTS AND THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT  
AND TOURISM**

**February 14, 2023 Conference Room 229 & Videoconference at 1:01PM  
S.B. 449 RELATING TO THE FESTIVAL OF PACIFIC ARTS**

Chairs Lee, DeCoite and members of the Committee, I am Karen Ewald, Interim Executive Director of the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts (SFCA), and I am grateful for the opportunity to testify in **SUPPORT** of S.B. 449.

The State Foundation on Culture and the Arts recognizes the Festival of Pacific Arts as an opportunity to promote and encourage culture and the arts as central to the quality of life of the people of Hawai'i.

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

Aaron J. Salā, PhD  
Gravitas Pasifika, LLC  
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13 February 2023

Hawai'i State Senate  
Committee on Transportation and Culture and the Arts  
Committee on Energy, Economic Development, and Tourism  
Hawai'i State Capitol  
415 South Beretania St.  
Honolulu, HI 96813

Aloha nui kākou e Chair Lee me Chair DeCoite,

As a Pacific Islander—both Native Hawaiian and Samoan; as founder and CEO of Gravitas Pasifika, a creative and consulting firm whose work is focused on the uplift of Native Hawaiian and other Pacific Islander communities; as a performing artist whose work is informed by a Pacific worldview and sense of being; and, as an attendee and participant in previous Festivals of Pacific Arts and Culture (FestPAC), I write this testimony in **full support of SB 449 relating to the Festival of Pacific Arts and Culture.**

Hawai'i's hosting of the 13th FestPAC is critically important for many reasons:

- Since its inception in 1972 and occurring every four years in nations throughout the Pacific regions of Melanesia, Micronesia, and Polynesia, FestPAC represents the largest convening of Pacific Islander artists and cultural practitioners. This is the first time that Hawai'i will have the honor and privilege of serving as host.
- With upwards of 3,500 delegates from 28 Pacific nations, along with accompanying traditional leaders, heads of state, and ministerial members, and a projected visitor count upwards of 10,000, FestPAC's reach is vast. Hawai'i has the potential to re-establish ourselves not just as a leader of East-West relations but also as a leader in Pacific islands and Oceania relations.
- FestPAC will not only infuse spending into the economy over the course of FestPAC proper (i.e. 6-16 June 2024) but will also establish a network of Pacific relations that has the potential to be (re)generative of Hawai'i- and Pacific-based activity far into the future. One pillar of proposed FestPAC programming is inclusive of an expo and series of conferences and symposia that feature Native Hawaiian and other Pacific Islander entrepreneurs, artists, and culture workers. The primary goal of this pillar is to initiate startups and to necessarily engage in professional and entrepreneurial development

that provide launch points for these startups to continue engagement beyond and between FestPACs.

- With the *2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent*, endorsed by Pacific leaders in July 2022, the *Pacific Regional Culture Strategy 2022-2032* initiated by the Pacific Community (SPC), and President Biden's *Pacific Partnership Strategy*, endorsed by the White House with support from Pacific leaders in 2022, the 13th FestPAC serves as the primary vehicle for realizing the aspirations of these strategies through real, concerted, and tactical means. This will catapult Hawai'i's role not just as an integral component but as a primary partner in the realization of these strategies and in US relations in the Oceania region.
- The 13th FestPAC will host delegates in venues around Honolulu, inclusive of the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa, the Bishop Museum, 'Iolani Palace, Magic Island, the Hawai'i Convention Center, and the Polynesian Cultural Center. Should timing, resources, and desire permit, we will design engagement on neighbor islands as well.

The Festival of Pacific Arts and Culture commenced in 1972 as a means to nurture and celebrate both traditional and innovative artistic and cultural practice from the region. Every four years since, save the cancellation of the Festival in 2020 owing to the Covid-19 pandemic, FestPAC has brought culture bearers together to share in the vast and profound cultures that make the Pacific ocean home.

Mahalo nui for this opportunity to provide testimony.

Aloha,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'ASB', with a vertical line extending downwards from the bottom of the signature.

Aaron J. Salā, PhD

**SB-449**

Submitted on: 2/12/2023 7:58:31 PM

Testimony for TCA on 2/14/2023 1:01:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Monte McComber	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha. The Festival of Pacific Arts and Culture (FestPAC) presents an opportunity for Hawaii similar to APEC and IUCN in that the event elevates Hawaii on the international level and, once again, proves that Hawaii can bring the world together for mutual good and benefit. FestPAC is also a unique economic driver. For 11 days (June 6-16, 2024) 28 Pacific Island Countries/Territories will reside in Hawaii with the keepers of their rich heritage and culture (musicians, artists, weavers, storytellers, writers, poets, documentarians, cinematographers, and more). For 11 days, people can come to Hawaii and experience the entirety of Pacific. No other travel required. The 11 days of inter-exchange on all levels surpasses any known gathering. As one example, consider our youth. Imagine the cost and time involved if our youth were to travel to each Pacific country/territory. This golden opportunity brings the Pacific directly to them. Meeting and learning about other cultures deepens and broadens our humanity. No other gathering, save for FestPAC, can do this. And FestPAC has been doing this, since 1972. The festival village also presents the largest market of hand-crafted goods from around the Pacific. Again, a golden opportunity. The long-standing agreement is that countries and territories pay their way to the host country, and once there the host country shelters them, feeds them, and provides the spaces for them to share the brilliance of their cultures. For 11 days, the good people of Hawaii will experience something they have never experienced. Never experienced. And may very likely not experience again in Hawaii. I recognize that there are many areas of need in our home. While it doesn't seem like a need, uplifting people and inspiring them is a basic need. A person who is not uplifted retreats to the shadows and is there consumed by evil forces. We then have to create programs and devote years to rehabilitating them, if that is even possible. Sometimes it is not. A person who is not inspired allows their talents and contributions to die. They spend the rest of their lives as a consumer, rather than a producer. I apologize for delving into the existential, but it's often too easy to think of a festival as something entirely frivolous, rather than something that brings and does good. I'm reminded of a simple lesson from an old tale. The tale of stone soup. If you know it, then you can see past the many reasons for saying no to this bill. And it's my hope that you can. Mahalo. - Monte McComber (a stone soup connoisseur)

**SB-449**

Submitted on: 2/11/2023 4:33:29 PM

Testimony for TCA on 2/14/2023 1:01:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Gerard Silva	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Wast of Tax Payer Money!!!



HAWAI'I LODGING & TOURISM  
ASSOCIATION

**LATE**

Testimony of  
Mufi Hannemann  
President & CEO  
Hawai'i Lodging & Tourism Association

Senate Committee on Transportation and Culture and the Arts  
Senate Committee on Energy, Economic Development, & Tourism  
Senate Bill 449  
February 14, 2023

Chair Lee, Chair DeCoite, and members of the Committees, mahalo for the opportunity to provide testimony on behalf of the Hawai'i Lodging & Tourism Association, the state's oldest and largest private sector visitor industry organization.

The Hawai'i Lodging & Tourism Association—nearly 700 members strong, representing more than 50,000 hotel rooms and nearly 40,000 lodging workers—is a proponent of the Festival of Pacific Arts, also known as FestPAC, and supports Senate Bill 449.

Initially scheduled for 2020, the event was to be hosted in Hawai'i for the first time since its inception in 1972. Had the COVID-19 pandemic not occurred, the event would have brought thousands of artists to our shores from various cultures throughout Oceania cementing Hawai'i's status as a gathering place and destination that excels in displaying and celebrating the many people and cultures of the Pacific.

We look forward to FestPAC being held in Hawai'i in 2024 and support the appropriation of funds to plan and execute this important event.

**For these reasons, we support Senate Bill 449.**

Mahalo for the opportunity to provide this testimony.