

**TESTIMONY OF
THE STATE FOUNDATION ON CULTURE AND THE ARTS
TO THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE
March 29, 2023 Conference Room 308 & Videoconference at 2:00 PM
S.B. 1532, S.D. 2, H.D. 1
RELATING CULTURE AND THE ARTS**

Chair Yamashita and members of the Committee, the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts (SFCA), is pleased to offer testimony in SUPPORT of S.B. 1532, S.D. 2, H.D. 1.

S.B.1532 S.B. 1532, S.D. 2, H.D. 1 **Establishes the Hawaii leadership award program** to honor individuals who have made considerable and outstanding contributions to Hawaii and serve as inspirations to others.

The State Foundation on Culture and the Arts has a long history of recognizing outstanding individuals in Hawaii with awards. From 1970 to 2019, the SFCA issued 118 awards in the categories of State of Hawai'i Order of Distinction for Cultural Leadership, Governor's Award for Distinguished Achievement in Culture, Arts and Humanities, Hawai'i Award for Literature, Individual Artist Fellowships, Hawaiian Architectural Award. Introducing the Leadership Award as described in SB1532 would fall within the purview of the SFCA.

In 2009, State funding to the SFCA to support the staff coordinator position and the awards was abolished. Until that time, awards were regularly given from 1970 through 2008. From 1995 through 2008, artists were recognized for their artistry only. In 2019, one-time special legislative funds were appropriated for the Individual Artist Fellowship awards. The 2019 funding enabled recognition of some of Hawaii's most accomplished and experienced teaching artists who were also known for their artistry.

In 2022, the State Legislature appropriated \$200,000 in Coronavirus State Fiscal Recovery Relief Funds to the SFCA for artist fellowships. In response, the SFCA developed a call for cultural fellowships, but put the project on hold when Governor Ige vetoed the funding.

Consistent appropriation of general funds from the legislature such as S.B. 1532 S.D. 2, H.D. 1 proposes in support of the recognizing leadership in our community will benefit the State's overall economy.

When we celebrate Hawaii's achievements, we invest in the economic stability of Hawaii.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this matter.