



**DEPARTMENT OF BUSINESS,  
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & TOURISM**  
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Statement of  
**JAMES KUNANE TOKIOKA**  
Director  
Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism  
before the  
**HOUSE COMMITTEE ON CULTURE AND ARTS**

Wednesday, February 04, 2026  
9:30 AM  
State Capitol, Conference Room 309 & Videoconference  
415 South Beretania Street

In consideration of  
**HB1815**  
**RELATING TO THE STATE FOUNDATION ON CULTURE AND THE ARTS**

Chair Kapela, Vice Chair Kong, and members of the Committee. The Department of Business, Economic Development and Tourism (DBEDT) supports HB1815, which explicitly applies existing grant standards to Performing Arts Grants Program grants under the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts (SFCA). This measure ensures consistency and accountability across all SFCA grant programs by clarifying that the same qualifying standards, conditions, review processes, and compliance requirements apply to both foundation grants and performing arts grants.

Currently, while HRS Chapter 9 establishes comprehensive standards for foundation grants, the statutes do not explicitly reference performing arts grants program grants in these provisions. HB 1815 addresses this gap by amending sections 9-11 through 9-18 to explicitly include performing arts grants program grants alongside foundation grants. This clarification ensures that all SFCA grant recipients—whether receiving foundation grants or performing arts grants—are subject to the same rigorous qualifying standards, including requirements for organizational governance, conflict of interest policies, professional qualifications, and program experience.

By extending these established standards to performing arts grants, HB 1815 strengthens fiscal oversight, promotes transparency, and helps ensure that public funds are used effectively to support Hawai'i's vibrant cultural and performing arts community. This measure supports DBEDT's commitment to fostering a thriving creative economy while maintaining responsible stewardship of state resources.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

**Testimony of KAREN EWALD, Executive Director  
State Foundation on Culture and the Arts**

**Before the  
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON CULTURE & ARTS  
WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 4, 2026 Conference Room 309 at 9:30AM**

**HOUSE BILL 1815  
RELATING TO  
THE STATE FOUNDATION ON CULTURE AND THE ARTS**

Dear Chair Kapela and members of the Committee,

The State Foundation on Culture and the Arts (SFCA), is dedicated to the promotion, perpetuation, and preservation of culture and the arts in Hawai'i.

SFCA **SUPPORTS** H.B. 1815 which explicitly applies existing grant standards to Performing Arts Grants Program grants under the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts.

**Chapter 9 Hawaii Revised Statutes provides the statutory authority and structure for the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts (SFCA) grants program.** It establishes eligibility standards for applicants, sets conditions that grant recipients must follow, and requires that all grant proposals be formally reviewed based on factors such as community need, program quality, and the applicant's ability to carry out the project. The chapter also governs how grant funds are allocated, requires grants to be issued through written contracts, and mandates ongoing monitoring and annual evaluation of funded projects. Additionally, it requires recipients to maintain compliance with eligibility requirements in order to remain qualified for future funding. Together, these provisions ensure that SFCA grant funds are administered responsibly, transparently, and in alignment with the foundation's public purpose. In order to administer the funds appropriated for the Performing Arts Grants Program in a timely manner, it would be appropriate to ensure this program is written in Chapter 9, HRS.

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



**HAWAII**  
STATE FOUNDATION on  
CULTURE and the ARTS

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