

JOSH GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR
KE KIA'ĀINA



GOV. MSG. NO. 1276

EXECUTIVE CHAMBERS
KE KE'ENA O KE KIA'ĀINA

June 26, 2026

The Honorable Ronald D. Kouchi
President of the Senate,
and Members of the Senate
Thirty-Third State Legislature
State Capitol, Room 409
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96813

The Honorable Nadine K. Nakamura
Speaker, and Members of the
House of Representatives
Thirty-Third State Legislature
State Capitol, Room 431
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96813

Aloha President Kouchi, Speaker Nakamura, and Members of the Legislature:

This is to inform you that on June 26, 2026, the following bill was signed into law:

S.B. NO. 3007, S.D. 2, H.D. 1,
C.D. 1

RELATING TO CULTURE AND ARTS.
ACT 174

Mahalo,

Josh Green, M.D.
Governor, State of Hawai'i

Approved by the Governor

on JUN 26 2026

THE SENATE
THIRTY-THIRD LEGISLATURE, 2026
STATE OF HAWAII

ACT 174
S.B. NO. 3007
S.D. 2
H.D. 1
C.D. 1

A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO CULTURE AND ARTS.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF HAWAII:

1 SECTION 1. The legislature finds that culture, arts, and
2 history are essential pillars of Hawaii's identity and are vital
3 to building vibrant, resilient, and connected communities. The
4 State has long supported these efforts through the state
5 foundation on culture and the arts, which plays an important
6 role in promoting the arts and expanding access for residents
7 statewide.

8 The legislature further finds that jurisdictions around the
9 world have advanced innovative, place-based strategies that
10 integrate culture, arts, and history into planning,
11 infrastructure, and community development, resulting in stronger
12 public spaces, increased economic activity, and more dynamic and
13 inclusive communities.

14 The legislature also finds that Hawaii can build upon its
15 existing foundation by expanding its capacity to support
16 creative community development, foster cross-sector



1 collaboration, and advance projects that meaningfully integrate
2 culture and the arts into the fabric of everyday life.

3 Accordingly, the purpose of this Act is to establish the
4 office of community culture, arts, and innovation as a sister
5 entity to the state foundation on culture and the arts to
6 broaden and strengthen the State's creative portfolio. The
7 office shall identify and advance best practices; support state
8 agencies and community partners in implementing innovative,
9 place-based strategies; and prioritize projects that enhance
10 public spaces, strengthen community connections, and improve
11 quality of life across the State.

12 The office shall also establish a community and cultural
13 partnership program to serve as a resource for communities
14 statewide. The program shall support efforts that preserve and
15 elevate cultural and historical assets, stimulate social and
16 economic activity, and catalyze positive, community-driven
17 change, with projects serving as scalable models for replication
18 in other communities, as appropriate.

19 SECTION 2. Chapter 201, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is
20 amended by adding a new part to be appropriately designated and
21 to read as follows:



1 **"PART . OFFICE OF COMMUNITY CULTURE, ARTS, AND INNOVATION**

2 **§201-A Definitions.** As used in this part:

3 "Executive director" means the executive director of the
4 office of community culture, arts, and innovation, appointed
5 pursuant to section 201-B(b).

6 "Office" means the office of community culture, arts, and
7 innovation established pursuant to section 201-B.

8 **§201-B Office of community culture, arts, and innovation;**
9 **established; executive director.** (a) There is established an
10 office of community culture, arts, and innovation within the
11 department of business, economic development, and tourism for
12 administrative purposes only.

13 (b) The office shall be headed by an executive director
14 who shall be appointed by the governor without regard to
15 chapter 76. Notwithstanding section 76-16(b)(17), the exemption
16 from chapter 76 under this subsection shall not expire.

17 (c) The executive director may employ staff for the office
18 without regard to chapters 76 and 89; provided that the staff
19 shall be members of the employees' retirement system and shall
20 be eligible to receive the benefits of any employee benefit
21 program generally applicable to officers and employees of the



1 State. Notwithstanding section 76-16(b)(17), the exemption from
2 chapter 76 under this subsection shall not expire.

3 (d) Department heads may temporarily assign additional
4 employees from existing positions within their departments to
5 the office; provided that the employees shall represent their
6 respective department's needs, assist other departments, or
7 otherwise support the needs of the office during the course of
8 their assignment with the office.

9 (e) The office may provide grants and contract for the
10 provision of programs and services to perform its functions and
11 duties pursuant to section 201-C.

12 **§201-C Office of community culture, arts, and innovation;**
13 **functions and duties.** The office shall:

14 (1) Execute projects and programs related to community
15 improvement as directed by the governor and
16 legislature;

17 (2) Support and assist other state departments and
18 agencies with creative and innovative improvements to
19 their projects, programs, and endeavors to add value
20 to communities;



1 (3) Develop creative and innovative projects, programs,
2 and endeavors and pilot new approaches to add value to
3 communities, their culture, and quality of life;

4 (4) Identify creative and innovative best practices used
5 by other jurisdictions, assess their value to the
6 State, and innovate accordingly;

7 (5) Ensure communication with the state foundation on
8 culture and the arts regarding the office's functions
9 and duties for consistency and better planning for the
10 State; and

11 (6) Adopt rules in accordance with chapter 91 for the
12 purposes of this part.

13 **§201-D Annual report.** The office shall submit an annual
14 report summarizing its activities during the preceding year to
15 the legislature no later than twenty days prior to the convening
16 of each regular session. The report shall include:

17 (1) Creative and innovative strategies proposed or
18 employed by other jurisdictions that the office has
19 identified that may have potential benefit for
20 communities in the State;



1 (2) Funds received and expended for the activities of the
2 office from federal, state, private, and philanthropic
3 sources;

4 (3) The office's programs and activities throughout the
5 year;

6 (4) Plans and direction for the coming year; and

7 (5) Any other findings and recommendations, including any
8 proposed legislation.

9 **§201-E Community and cultural partnership program;**

10 **established.** (a) In addition to other duties, the office shall
11 establish a community and cultural partnership program focused
12 on improving communities. The program shall serve as a
13 community resource to enhance historical culture, stimulate
14 social and economic activity, create positive change in the
15 community, and serve as a template for improvements in other
16 communities, as may be appropriate.

17 (b) The office may contract with one or more entities to
18 administer the community and cultural partnership program and
19 complete the actions required by subsection (c).

20 (c) The program shall endeavor to:



- 1 (1) Identify and organize community stakeholders and other
- 2 community-based organizations that may contribute to
- 3 the community and cultural partnership program;
- 4 (2) Engage the community to develop improvements that
- 5 exhibit the area's history from its origins to the
- 6 present day;
- 7 (3) Assess the physical, social, and economic conditions
- 8 of properties and infrastructure in the area;
- 9 (4) Coordinate with stakeholders to provide for
- 10 preservation, adaptive reuse, and mixed-use diversity
- 11 and assist with design and permitting information to
- 12 help property owners, business owners, and developers
- 13 who are considering property improvements to best
- 14 reflect the cultural narrative and historical context
- 15 of the area;
- 16 (5) Organize culture and arts and improvement projects to
- 17 improve and expand public spaces and enhance streets,
- 18 infrastructure, facades, and vacant storefronts;
- 19 (6) Organize community culture and arts events, including
- 20 the closures of streets for events and multi-use
- 21 purposes that can enhance community life by providing



- 1 safe and inclusive opportunities for recreation,
2 active transportation, and cultural engagement;
- 3 (7) Help facilitate the establishment of a business
4 improvement district, or similar organization, and
5 related community services;
- 6 (8) Seek additional funding to improve the community and
7 help enhance a geographically defined area that
8 actively preserves, showcases, and evolves the
9 cultural, historical, and artistic identity of a
10 community through ongoing cultural practices, local
11 businesses, public spaces, and programming, in a
12 manner that is community-driven, supports economic
13 vitality, and provides authentic, place-based
14 experiences for residents and visitors;
- 15 (9) Draft a statewide strategic economic and physical
16 revitalization design implementation plan with
17 proposed projects, starting with the Honolulu
18 Chinatown area;
- 19 (10) Work with appropriate agencies and stakeholders to
20 better design and integrate active, safe, and
21 protected multi-modal pedestrian, bicycle, and public



1 transit through the area, including to any nearby
2 transit hubs or rail stations; and

3 (11) Identify and develop other innovative projects,
4 programming, or improvements to enhance the
5 community."

6 SECTION 3. There is appropriated out of the general
7 revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$300,000 or so much
8 thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2026-2027 for the
9 establishment of the office of community culture, arts, and
10 innovation, including for the following purposes:

- 11 (1) The establishment of one full-time equivalent
- 12 (1.0 FTE) executive director position;
- 13 (2) The establishment of one full-time equivalent
- 14 (1.0 FTE) specialist position; and
- 15 (3) Other expenses for the purposes of this Act.

16 The sum appropriated shall be expended by the department of
17 business, economic development, and tourism for the purposes of
18 this Act.

19 SECTION 4. In codifying the new sections added by
20 section 2 of this Act, the revisor of statutes shall substitute



1 appropriate section numbers for the letters used in designating
2 the new sections in this Act.

3 SECTION 5. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 2026.



S.B. NO. 3007
S.D. 2
H.D. 1
C.D. 1

APPROVED this 26th day of June , 2026

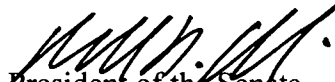
A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jonathan G. Green', written in a cursive style.


GOVERNOR OF THE STATE OF HAWAII

THE SENATE OF THE STATE OF HAWAI‘I

Date: May 6, 2026
Honolulu, Hawai‘i 96813

We hereby certify that the foregoing Bill this day passed Final Reading in the Senate of the Thirty-Third Legislature of the State of Hawai‘i, Regular Session of 2026.


President of the Senate


Clerk of the Senate

SB No. 3007, SD 2, HD 1, CD 1

THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF HAWAII

Date: May 6, 2026
Honolulu, Hawaii

We hereby certify that the above-referenced Bill on this day passed Final Reading in the House of Representatives of the Thirty-Third Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session of 2026.



Nadine K. Nakamura
Speaker
House of Representatives



Brian L. Takeshita
Chief Clerk
House of Representatives