



TESTIMONY OF
CAROLINE ANDERSON
Interim President & CEO
Hawai'i Tourism Authority
before the
SENATE COMMITTEE ON ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TOURISM
Tuesday, March 31, 2026
1:00 p.m.
State Capitol, Room 229

In consideration of
GOVERNOR'S MESSAGE NO. 596
CONFIRMATION OF LINDA WONG
ADVISORY BOARD OF DIRECTORS, HAWAII TOURISM AUTHORITY

Aloha Chair DeCoite, Vice Chair Wakai, and Members of the Committee,

Linda Wong has been a valuable member of the Hawai'i Tourism Authority (HTA) Advisory Board of Directors and we support her ongoing commitment to serve on our board and the Governor's recommendation for her confirmation.

As a member of HTA's Advisory Board, Ms. Wong serves as vice chair of the Film Tourism Standing Committee, which guides initiatives that promote Hawai'i through film and television and integrated marketing to drive economic development and foster a positive, authentic representation of the state; on the Sports Tourism Standing Committee, which advances Hawai'i's position as a premier destination for sports-related travel and events; on the newly formed Governance Study Permitted Interaction Group, which reviews and makes recommendations to the Advisory Board on the Governance Study Final Recommendations; and on the Strategic Plan Permitted Interaction Group, which discussed and reviewed proposed strategies and tactics and provides recommendations for HTA's 2026-2030 Strategic Plan.

As a member of HTA's Advisory Board, Ms. Wong serves as vice chair of the Film Tourism Standing Committee, which guides initiatives that promote Hawai'i through film, television and integrated marketing, supporting economic development and authentic representation of the state.

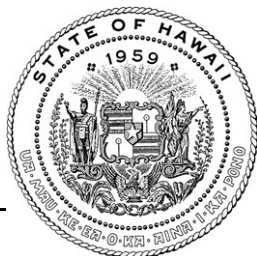
Ms. Wong has a wealth of experience in state and county government and the hospitality industry. She served as Chief of Staff to former Mayor Frank F. Fasi for a decade, and prior to that, held appointed positions in the State House of Representatives, the State Senate, and the Office of the Lieutenant Governor.

She is currently President and CEO of World of Aloha, which oversees the preservation of the 42-acre Kahalu'u Fishpond, one of the areas listed on the State and Federal Registers of Historic Sites. She also co-developed, with Danny Kaleikini, the Aloha Ke Akua Wedding Chapel,

dedicated to the late Reverend Abraham Akaka, to meet the needs of the Japanese wedding market.

Mr. Wong's business insights on how to effectively balance visitor experiences with the stewardship of cultural and historic resources have been valuable. In summary, we support Ms. Wong's nomination and believe she will continue to be a strong contributor to the HTA Advisory Board of Directors.

Mahalo for the opportunity to share our support.



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

JOSH GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR

SYLVIA LUKE
LT. GOVERNOR

JAMES KUNANE TOKIOKA
DIRECTOR

DANE K. WICKER
DEPUTY DIRECTOR

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Testimony of
JAMES KUNANE TOKIOKA
Director

Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism
before the

SENATE COMMITTEE ON ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TOURISM

Tuesday, March 31, 2026

1:00 p.m.

State Capitol, Room 229

LATE

In consideration of

GM 596

**Submitting for consideration and confirmation to the Advisory Board of Directors
of the Hawai'i Tourism Authority, Gubernatorial Nominee,
LINDA WONG, for a term to expire 06-30-2029.**

Aloha Chair DeCoite, Vice Chair Wakai, and Members of the Committee,

Mahalo for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of the Governor's recommendation that Linda Wong be confirmed as a member of the Hawai'i Tourism Authority (HTA) Advisory Board of Directors.

Ms. Wong brings extensive experience in state and county government, as well as the hospitality and visitor industries. She served as chief of staff to former Mayor Frank F. Fasi for a decade and previously held appointed positions in the State House of Representatives, the State Senate and the Office of the Lieutenant Governor.

She is currently president and chief executive officer of World of Aloha, which oversees the preservation of the 42-acre Kahalu'u Fishpond, one of the sites listed on the state and federal registers of historic places. She also co-developed, with Danny Kaleikini, the Aloha Ke Akua Wedding Chapel, dedicated to the late Rev. Abraham Akaka, to serve the Japanese wedding market.

As a member of HTA's Advisory Board, Ms. Wong serves as the vice chair of the Film Tourism Standing Committee. This committee guides initiatives aimed at promoting Hawai'i through film and television, as well as integrated marketing, to drive economic development and foster a positive and authentic representation of the state.

Additionally, Ms. Wong is a member of the Sports Tourism Standing Committee, which works to enhance Hawai'i's status as a premier destination for sports-related travel and events. She has also volunteered to participate in the newly formed Governance Study Permitted Interaction Group, which reviews and makes recommendations to the Advisory Board based on the Governance Study Final Recommendations. Furthermore,

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Ms. Wong participated in the Strategic Plan Permitted Interaction Group, where proposed strategies and tactics are discussed and reviewed to provide recommendations for HTA's 2026-2030 Strategic Plan.

Ms. Wong's perspective on balancing visitor experiences with stewardship of cultural and historic resources has been valuable to HTA.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of Ms. Wong.