



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. 604**  
**CONFIRMATION OF CHRISTIAN WEST**  
**ADVISORY BOARD OF DIRECTORS, HAWAII TOURISM AUTHORITY**

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

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify in support of Christian West's nomination to serve as a member of the Hawai'i Tourism Authority (HTA) Advisory Board of Directors.

As a member of HTA's Advisory Board, Mr. West serves as chair of the Sports Tourism Standing Committee, which advances Hawai'i's position as a premier destination for sports-related travel and events and provides strategic guidance on initiatives that leverage sports tourism to drive economic impact, enhance the destination's brand, support partnerships, and strengthen community well-being.

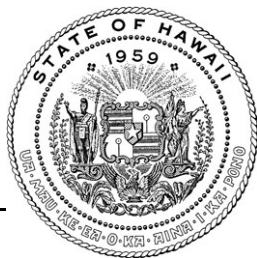
With over two decades of experience advocating for worker rights in Hawai'i's hotel union, Mr. West exemplifies the qualities we need at the HTA Advisory Board of Directors. As the President of ILWU Local 142, he leads Hawai'i's largest private union, representing 16,000 workers and overseeing contract negotiations for almost 10,000 hotel employees. He has effectively navigated complex labor relations, demonstrating strong communication and organizational skills.

Mr. West's ability to build relationships between union members and hotel management is essential for creating a collaborative environment that encourages growth and understanding. His dedication to safety and educating workers about their rights has been evident throughout his tenure as the Hawai'i Longshore Division Representative.

As the HTA continues to improve workforce development in the tourism industry and develops its next five-year strategic tourism plan, along with updates to the state's Tourism Function Plan, Mr. West's insights into the challenges faced by hotel workers and the opportunities for the hotel industry will be invaluable.

Mr. West's dedication to Hawai'i and its community is reflected in his professional work and his proactive role in civic and legislative affairs. Furthermore, his diverse experience extends beyond union leadership. As a longshoreman and crane operator, he understood the critical aspects of operations at our ports. Mr. West is dedicated to youth development, as evidenced by coaching ILH high school wrestling teams and mentoring young wrestlers. His combination of leadership, advocacy, and community involvement makes him a strong candidate for the board. We wholeheartedly support his nomination and believe he will continue to contribute significantly to the HTA.

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'IKĀ'I

**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

In consideration of  
**GM 604**  
**Submitting for consideration and confirmation to the Advisory Board of Directors  
of the Hawai'i Tourism Authority, gubernatorial nominee,  
CHRISTIAN WEST, for a term to expire 06-30-2028.**

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

Mahalo for the opportunity to provide testimony in **support** of Christian West's nomination to serve as a member of the Hawai'i Tourism Authority (HTA) Advisory Board of Directors.

With more than two decades of experience advocating for worker rights in Hawai'i's hotel union, Mr. West brings an important workforce perspective to the HTA Advisory Board. As president of ILWU Local 142, he leads Hawai'i's largest private union, representing thousands of workers and overseeing contract negotiations involving nearly 10,000 hotel employees.

His ability to build relationships between union members and hotel management is important to creating a collaborative environment that supports growth and understanding. His dedication to safety, worker education and civic engagement has been evident throughout his leadership roles.

As a member of HTA's Advisory Board, Mr. West serves as chair of the Sports Tourism Standing Committee, which advances Hawai'i's position as a premier destination for sports-related travel and events and provides strategic guidance on initiatives that leverage sports tourism to drive economic impact, enhance the destination's brand, support partnerships, and strengthen community well-being.

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As HTA continues its work on workforce development, the next five-year strategic plan and updates to the state Tourism Functional Plan, Mr. West's understanding of labor issues and hotel industry operations will remain valuable.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of Mr. West.



## **HAWAII STATE AFL-CIO**

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March 31, 2026

The Thirty-Third Legislature  
The Senate  
Committee on Economic Development and Tourism

**SUBJECT: TESTIMONY IN STRONG SUPPORT OF GM604 – SUBMITTING FOR CONSIDERATION AND CONFIRMATION TO THE ADVISORY BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE HAWAII TOURISM AUTHORITY, GUBERNATORIAL NOMINEE, CHRISTIAN WEST, FOR A TERM TO EXPIRE 06-30-2028**

Chair DeCoite, Vice Chair Wakai, and members of the committee:

The Hawaii State AFL-CIO is in strong support of GM604, confirming Christian West to the Hawai'i Tourism Authority Advisory Board (HTA).

Tourism remains a central driver of Hawai'i's economy, and the decisions made by the HTA directly affect working families across the state. Those decisions influence job quality, economic stability, and whether the benefits of tourism are shared in a way that people can sustain over time.

Mr. West brings a practical understanding of how the visitor industry operates and how policy decisions translate on the ground. That perspective is important as the HTA continues to refine its approach to tourism management and accountability. His appointment supports a more balanced approach that considers long-term stability and the interests of working families.

We urge the committee to advance GM604.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Randy Perreira".

Randy Perreira  
President  
Hawaii State AFL-CIO