

PATRICK BRANCO

1. Why do you wish to serve as a member of the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts?

I wish to serve because I believe culture and the arts play an important role in shaping community, preserving identity, and strengthening connections across Hawai‘i. Growing up in Kailua, I learned about culture through everyday life. It was shaped by family, community gatherings, and the places that bring people together. Those experiences helped form my appreciation for the importance of maintaining strong cultural connections and ensuring that they remain accessible to future generations.

Through my work in public service, I have seen how the arts provide opportunities for expression, reflection, and shared understanding. I also appreciate the Foundation’s mission to promote, perpetuate, and preserve culture and the arts in Hawai‘i. I would be grateful for the opportunity to support the Foundation's work in a thoughtful and responsible way.

2. What is your understanding of the role and responsibilities of a member of the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts?

My understanding is that the Foundation's board members are responsible for helping ensure that public resources dedicated to culture and the arts are managed responsibly, transparently, and in a way that benefits communities across Hawai‘i.

This includes providing oversight of programs that fund artists and cultural practitioners, support arts education, preserve cultural traditions, and integrate art into public spaces. It also requires careful, fair decision-making that reflects the diversity of communities across all the islands.

An important part of the role is engaging with stakeholders, including artists, educators, cultural practitioners, and community members, to ensure the Foundation’s work remains responsive to community needs and aligned with its mission.

3. Why are you qualified to serve?

I would approach this opportunity with respect for the role and a willingness to learn, while drawing on my experience in public service, cultural programming, and operational leadership.

As Cultural Affairs Attaché at the United States Embassy in Caracas, I supported cultural initiatives, including art exhibitions, artist exchanges, and public programs that promoted dialogue and connection across communities. That experience strengthened my understanding of how the arts can bring people together and support broader engagement.

As a former member of the Hawai‘i State House of Representatives, I worked closely with constituents and community stakeholders to address local priorities and to ensure responsible use of public resources.

In my current role as Operations Manager supporting the United States Pacific Fleet, I manage a contract valued at more than several million dollars and work across organizations to ensure accountability, coordination, and effective execution. This experience has strengthened my ability to evaluate programs, manage resources carefully, and approach decisions with discipline.

4. What goals or priorities would you hope to accomplish during your term of service?

If confirmed, my focus would be on supporting a strong and accessible arts and cultural ecosystem across Hawai‘i. This includes supporting opportunities for local artists and cultural practitioners, particularly those rooted in Hawai‘i’s communities and traditions, and ensuring that communities across all islands have access to programs and resources. I would also support efforts to strengthen arts education and public art, recognizing their roles in shaping identity and fostering community connection.

In addition, I would be interested in supporting efforts to expand the acquisition and preservation of Native Hawaiian art within the State’s collection, recognizing its importance to our history and identity. I would also welcome opportunities to learn from and collaborate with institutions such as Iolani Palace in their work related to art acquisition, stewardship, and restoration.

I would also prioritize engagement with communities and stakeholders to better understand their perspectives and support decisions that reflect their needs, consistent with the Foundation’s mission.

5. Conflict of Interest

At this time, I am not aware of any conflicts of interest that would affect my ability to serve impartially on the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts. If confirmed, I will conduct myself with integrity and transparency and will disclose and address any potential conflicts in accordance with applicable guidelines.

Regarding the confirmation hearing, I would welcome the opportunity to participate via Zoom. I am currently on short-term military orders in Virginia Beach and do not yet have my schedule confirmed for that day. I will make every effort to join if my schedule allows.

Thank you again for your consideration.

Mahalo,

Pat Branco



HAWAII

STATE FOUNDATION on
CULTURE and the ARTS

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250 South Hotel Street
Second Floor
Honolulu, HI 96813

Governor
Josh Green, M.D.

Comptroller
Keith A. Regan

Chairperson
Konrad Ng

Commissioners
Susan Browne
Sean Connelly
Randall Francisco
Randall Fujiki
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**Testimony of KAREN EWALD, Executive Director
State Foundation on Culture and the Arts**

**Before the
SENATE COMMITTEE ON WATER, LAND, CULTURE AND THE ARTS
THURSDAY, APRIL 23, 2026 Conference Room 225 at 1:00 PM**

GM 769

**Submitting for consideration and confirmation to the State Foundation on
Culture and the Arts, Gubernatorial Nominee, PATRICK BRANCO, for a term to
expire 06-30-2030**

Dear Chair Lee and members of the Committee,

I am writing in strong support of the confirmation of Patrick Branco to serve as a Commissioner for the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts.

Mr. Branco's experience as a former legislator provides him with a strong understanding of public policy, governance, and the legislative process. He is well-versed in how decisions are made at the state level and bring a practical perspective on how to advance initiatives within governmental frameworks. His experience with federal agencies and funding structures further strengthens their ability to help the Commission navigate partnerships, leverage resources, and align with broader national arts and cultural priorities. Mr. Branco's extensive experience with the U.S. Department of State will also bring a unique and valuable perspective to the Commission.

Throughout his career, Mr. Branco has demonstrated the ability to listen carefully, collaborate across sectors, and make balanced decisions that consider both artistic integrity and public impact. Mr. Branco approaches leadership with integrity and respect. They value transparency, inclusivity, and stewardship of public resources—qualities essential for a commissioner entrusted with supporting artists, cultural practitioners, and organizations statewide.

I am confident that Patrick will contribute meaningfully to the Commission's work, helping to strengthen programs, expand outreach, and ensure that future generations can experience and participate in a vibrant cultural landscape.

Thank you for your consideration of this testimony and for your continued support of the arts in our state.



HAWAII REGIONAL COUNCIL OF CARPENTERS

April 23, 2026

TO: The Honorable Chris Lee, Chair
The Honorable Lorraine R. Inouye, Vice Chair
Members of the Senate Committee on Water, Land, Culture and the Arts

RE: TESTIMONY IN STRONG SUPPORT FOR THE CONSIDERATION AND CONFIRMATION TO THE STATE FOUNDATION ON CULTURE AND THE ARTS, GUBERNATORIAL NOMINEE, PATRICK BRANCO, FOR A TERM TO EXPIRE 06-30-2030.

Aloha Chair Lee, Vice Chair Inouye, and Members of the Committee,

We are writing in strong support of the appointment of Patrick Branco to serve on the Hawai'i State Foundation on Culture and the Arts.

Patrick Branco brings a strong and relevant background that aligns well with the foundation's mission in advancing Hawai'i's cultural vitality by promoting, perpetuating, and preserving the arts across the state. With seven years of experience serving as a U.S. diplomat in Colombia, Pakistan, and Venezuela, he has demonstrated the ability to navigate complex cultural environments, build consensus, and engage meaningfully across diverse communities. This global experience reflects a deep understanding of cultural exchange and the importance of fostering mutual respect and appreciation for different perspectives.

In addition, Mr. Branco's service as a State Representative further demonstrates a strong commitment to public service and cultural stewardship. During his tenure representing House District 50 from 2020 to 2022, he supported legislation and initiatives that advanced arts and cultural access across Hawai'i. His work reflected a recognition of the important role that arts education, cultural preservation, and community-based programming play in strengthening local identity and supporting community well-being. He also supported efforts to ensure continued investment in Hawai'i's cultural institutions, reinforcing the State's broader commitment to preserving and promoting its unique history and heritage. These efforts reflect a clear understanding that investment in culture and the arts is essential to Hawai'i's identity, education system, and economy.

Equally important is Mr. Branco's demonstrated commitment to community and working families. Coming from a union household, Mr. Branco understands the value of collective voice, access to opportunity, and community uplift. This perspective is essential to the Foundation's work in ensuring that arts programming and resources reach all communities, including those that have been historically underserved.

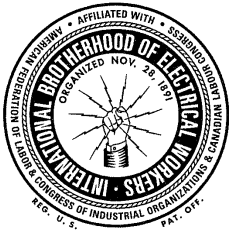
Mr. Branco's leadership experience, combined with a clear commitment to public service, positions them well to contribute thoughtfully to the Foundation's strategic direction. Their ability to bridge communities, engage stakeholders, and approach issues with both cultural sensitivity and practical insight will be an asset to the Foundation as it continues to expand access to the arts statewide.

STATE HEADQUARTERS & BUSINESS OFFICES

OAHU: 1311 Houghtailing Street, Honolulu Hawaii 96817-2712 • Ph. (808) 847-5761 Fax (808) 440-9188
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For these reasons, we respectfully urge the Committee to support the appointment of Patrick Branco to the Hawai'i State Foundation on Culture and the Arts.

Mahalo for the opportunity to provide testimony.



International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers

LOCAL UNION NO. 1186 • Affiliated with AFL-CIO

1935 HAU STREET, 5TH FLOOR • HONOLULU, HI 96819-5003
TELEPHONE (808) 847-5341 • FAX (808) 847-2224

4/23/2026

TO: HOUSE COMMITTEE ON WATER AND LAND
RE: Testimony for GM769 Hearing 1pm

Aloha Chair Hashem, Vice Chair Morikawa, and Members of the Committee,

The International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers Local Union 1186, (IBEW 1186) represents over 2,700 members in the Electrical Construction Industry, Telecommunications, Motor & Marine, Civil Service Employees, and Professional Teachers at Kamehameha Kapalama and Mid Pacific Institute. Thank you for the opportunity to testify on GM 769.

On behalf of IBEW Local 1186, we are pleased to offer our strong endorsement of Patrick Bronco for service on the Hawai'i State Foundation for Culture and the Arts.

Patrick Bronco has consistently demonstrated a deep commitment to the people and communities of Hawai'i through his leadership, service, and advocacy. His ability to bring individuals together across diverse backgrounds reflects a genuine respect for culture, tradition, and the shared values that define our islands. We believe these qualities are essential for a member of the Foundation, whose mission is to preserve, promote, and perpetuate Hawai'i's unique cultural heritage.

Throughout his work with our organization and the broader community, Patrick has shown integrity, thoughtfulness, and a collaborative spirit. He understands the importance of supporting local artists, cultural practitioners, and programs that enrich our communities. Just as importantly, he recognizes the role that arts and culture play in strengthening identity, education, and economic vitality across the state.

For these reasons, we respectfully urge the Committee to support the appointment of Patrick Bronco to the Hawai'i State Foundation for Culture and the Arts

Sincerely,

IBEW LU 1186

Testimony of Dr. Danny de Gracia, Th.D., D.Min. in support of the confirmation of PATRICK BRANCO (Governor's Message 769) to the State Foundation on Culture and Arts, before the:

Senate Committee on Water, Land, Culture, and the Arts

Chair, Sen. Chris Lee

Vice Chair, Sen. Lorraine R. Inouye

Thursday, April 23, 2026

1:00 p.m.

Conference Room 225

Chair Lee, Vice Chair Inouye, Honorable Members of the Committee:

It is my honor to submit testimony in strong support of Patrick Branco during your advise and consent hearing for his confirmation to the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts.

Mr. Branco is a former legislator, a current U.S. Navy Reserve lieutenant, and an eminently qualified gentleman who brings great acumen to our local government service. I have had the honor of knowing him for the past six years, and I admire his commitment to attention-to-detail in all he does; his profound love for the Hawaiian Islands and desire to mentor local youth into leadership roles; and most importantly, his ability to represent all people with aloha. He is also a friend who I trust.

The State Foundation on Culture and the Arts is a critically important organization because the humanities give us the reason "why" behind our civilization and the purpose behind our efforts. Art is unique in that it is an expression of our values, as well as being a warning of our concerns for the patterns of the past. To be able to effectively steward the study, preservation, and commissioning of the humanities, one must have an understanding of the human spirit and a knowledge of many broad fields. Branco's educational and career experience from our State Legislature to the White House provides him the depth and scope needed to ensure that the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts is well-grounded and representative of the direction humankind is evolving in.

Please vote "Yes" to confirm Branco for this appointment. Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

GM-769

Submitted on: 4/20/2026 3:40:03 PM

Testimony for WLA on 4/23/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Lorna Takehara Strand	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

It is an honor to submit a letter of endorsement for Patrick Branco whose educational, cultural, political and ethnic background gives him nuanced understanding of and appreciation for beauty and truth in the arts. His work in a host of nations and with peoples from around the globe will serve as an asset to the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts. He is a tireless worker who delivers on his commitments.

I heartily encourage his selection as a member of the foundation.

-Lorna Takehara Strand

GM-769

Submitted on: 4/20/2026 6:24:34 PM

Testimony for WLA on 4/23/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kaipo Kaawaloa	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Patrick Branco brings a rare and valuable combination of global perspective and deep local grounding that makes him exceptionally well-suited for service on the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts. Having served the public at both the federal and state levels, he has developed a strong understanding of governance, policy, and community needs across diverse contexts. His experiences traveling and working beyond Hawai‘i have broadened his worldview, while reinforcing the importance of preserving the cultural integrity of Hawai‘i.

Equally important, Patrick is versed in his ‘ike Hawai‘i and carries a genuine appreciation for the role of arts and culture in sustaining place, identity, and community. He understands that the arts are not merely expressive, but foundational to perpetuating knowledge, values, and connections across generations. His ability to bridge modern public service with a deep respect for Hawaiian culture and Hawai‘i as a whole positions him to thoughtfully contribute to the Foundation’s mission and ensure that Hawai‘i’s cultural legacy continues to thrive.

GM-769

Submitted on: 4/20/2026 8:58:41 PM

Testimony for WLA on 4/23/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Konrad Ng	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Testimony in Support of GM769 – Patrick Branco

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

I write in support of the nomination of Patrick Branco to serve on the Hawai‘i State Foundation on Culture and the Arts (SFCA) Commission.

As Chair of the SFCA Commission, I see the importance of thoughtful, community-minded leadership. Mr. Branco brings a strong record of public service and a clear commitment to community.

I respectfully urge the Committee to support his confirmation.

Mahalo for the opportunity to provide this testimony.

Sincerely,

Konrad Ng, Ph.D.

Chair, Hawai‘i State Foundation on Culture and the Arts Commission

GM-769

Submitted on: 4/21/2026 6:37:17 AM

Testimony for WLA on 4/23/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Leimomi Khan	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Strongly support the confirmation of **Patrick Branco** to the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts, for a term to expire June 30, 2030 .

Mr. Branco brings a rare and valuable combination of public service, global perspective, and deep commitment to Hawai‘i. His professional experience reflects both leadership and the ability to work across sectors—qualities that are essential to advancing the mission of the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts.

As a former State Representative for House District 50, Mr. Branco demonstrated a clear commitment to community, securing significant resources for local schools, infrastructure, and workforce development, including establishing the Youth Conservation Corps program that created meaningful opportunities for Hawai‘i’s youth . His ability to convene stakeholders and resolve longstanding issues reflects a collaborative leadership style that will serve the Foundation well.

Beyond Hawai‘i, Mr. Branco’s service at the highest levels of government—including as a White House Fellow in the Office of the Secretary of the Navy and in multiple diplomatic roles with the U.S. Department of State—demonstrates his capacity for strategic thinking, cultural engagement, and international collaboration . His work managing cultural and educational programs abroad, including the administration of millions of dollars in grants, directly aligns with the responsibilities of supporting arts, culture, and community-based initiatives.

Equally important, Mr. Branco’s experience with Hawai‘i Green Growth shows his commitment to sustainability, community engagement, and cross-sector partnerships—approaches that are critical in strengthening Hawai‘i’s cultural ecosystem and ensuring that the arts remain accessible and relevant to our communities.

The State Foundation on Culture and the Arts plays a vital role in preserving, perpetuating, and advancing the cultural identity of Hawai‘i. It requires leaders who understand both the importance of culture and the need to build bridges between government, community, and global partners. Mr. Branco’s background, including his experience in communications, public service, and cultural programming, positions him well to contribute meaningfully to this work.

At a time when the preservation and elevation of Hawai'i's cultural heritage is more important than ever, we believe Mr. Branco offers both the vision and the experience necessary to help guide the Foundation forward.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

GM-769

Submitted on: 4/21/2026 10:41:03 AM

Testimony for WLA on 4/23/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kevin Holst	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am pleased to offer my strong support for the nomination of Patrick Pihana Branco to serve on the Hawai'i State Foundation on Culture and the Arts. Patrick is a person of integrity, professionalism, and deep commitment to public service. As someone born and raised in Hawai'i, he brings a genuine appreciation for the importance of culture, community, and preserving the values that make our islands unique. Throughout his career in public service, Patrick has demonstrated thoughtful leadership, sound judgment, and the ability to work collaboratively with people from many backgrounds. I am confident he would serve the Foundation with care, respect, and a sincere commitment to supporting artists, cultural practitioners, and communities across Hawai'i. I respectfully ask the Committee to favorably consider his nomination.

GM-769

Submitted on: 4/21/2026 10:51:37 AM

Testimony for WLA on 4/23/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kekoa McClellan	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

TO: Committee on Water, Land, Culture and the Arts
Senator Chris Lee, Chair
Senator Lorraine R. Inouye, Vice Chair

FROM: Kekoa McClellan

RE: GM 769: Submitting for consideration and confirmation to the Board of the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts, Gubernatorial Nominee, PATRICK BRANCO.

Aloha Chair Lee, Vice Chair Inouye, and members of the Committee:
I am writing to you today to express my **strongest support for the confirmation of Patrick Branco to the Board of the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts (SFCA).**

I have had the privilege of knowing Patrick for 25 years, and I can speak personally to the exceptional character he will bring to this Board. Patrick is a man of immense integrity. In every interaction—whether professional or personal—he leads with transparency, humility, and a deep-seated respect for the diverse voices that make up our community. He is a leader who listens first and acts with a steady moral compass.

His passion for service is part of his DNA. From his time in the Foreign Service to his tenure in the State House, Patrick has consistently demonstrated that he views leadership as a kuleana to the people of Hawai‘i. He does not seek roles for the title; he seeks them because he has a genuine, tireless drive to contribute to the well-being of our islands.

Specific to this nomination, Patrick’s support for culture and the arts is profound and authentic. He understands that our arts and cultural heritage are the bedrock of Hawai‘i’s identity and are essential to a thriving, empathetic society. He possesses the unique ability to honor our history while championing the innovation necessary for our creative industries to flourish in the future.

Patrick Branco has the vision, the heart, and the work ethic required to be an outstanding steward for the SFCA. I have full confidence that he will serve the Foundation and the people of Hawai'i with great distinction.

I most strongly urge this committee to recommend the confirmation of Patrick Branco.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

Kekoa McClellan

GM-769

Submitted on: 4/21/2026 12:55:43 PM

Testimony for WLA on 4/23/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Ryan Kanakaole	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

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

My name is Ryan Kanakaole, and I am testifying in my personal capacity in strong support of the nomination of Patrick Branco to the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts.

I have known Patrick for well over 20 years, and throughout that time, I have consistently known him to put others before himself and to put his community first. He leads with integrity, humility, and a genuine commitment to service. In all his work, he always embodies a sense of aloha, which I believe is a foundational element for effective public service in Hawai'i. I am privileged to call him my friend.

Patrick is an asset to the State in whatever capacity he chooses to serve. He is solid, and he deserves this appointment.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

**Testimony in Support of Patrick Branco
The State Foundation on Culture and the Arts**

Aloha Chair and Members of the Committee,

I am writing in support of the nomination of **Patrick Branco** to serve on the **State Foundation on Culture and the Arts**.

I have known Patrick for more than 15 years through our shared public service work and have witnessed firsthand his commitment to the people of Hawai'i, the preservation of its culture, and the well-being of its communities.

As a former U.S. diplomat and Hawai'i State Legislator, Patrick has represented Hawai'i with integrity at both the local and international levels. In each role, he has worked to ensure that Hawai'i's people, values, and cultural identity remain at the forefront of the conversations that shape our future.

He has consistently recognized that Hawai'i's cultural heritage is not something to be acknowledged only in ceremony, but something that must be protected, supported, and carried forward for future generations. His leadership has always reflected a clear understanding that culture and community are inseparable.

Patrick understands that arts and culture are essential to preserving Hawai'i's identity and strengthening our communities. His extensive experience in public service, along with his sense of identity and respect for Hawai'i's history and people, would make him a valuable member of this foundation.

I respectfully ask for your favorable consideration of his nomination.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Ellie S.

GM-769

Submitted on: 4/21/2026 10:04:42 PM

Testimony for WLA on 4/23/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Lynn Finnegan	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF GM769

**Appointment of Patrick Pihana Branco
State Foundation on Culture and the Arts**

Chair Lee, Vice Chair Inouye, and Members of the Committee:

I am writing in strong support of the nomination of Patrick Pihana Branco to the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts, as transmitted in Governor’s Message No. 769.

I had the opportunity to work closely with Patrick on a project, where I was able to observe firsthand his deep understanding of Hawai‘i and its cultural context. He approaches his work with a strong sense of place—grounded in respect for the traditions, values, and communities that make Hawai‘i unique. This is not surface-level awareness; it is a thoughtful and intentional perspective that informs how he engages with people and approaches decision-making.

Patrick brings a rare combination of local grounding and global experience. Born and raised in Kailua and a graduate of Kamehameha Schools, he has a strong foundation in Hawai‘i’s cultural identity. His experience as a U.S. diplomat further strengthens his ability to understand how culture shapes communities and informs policy, giving him a broader lens that will be valuable in this role.

The State Foundation on Culture and the Arts plays a critical role in preserving Hawai‘i’s cultural heritage while supporting the growth and accessibility of the arts. This requires individuals who are thoughtful, balanced, and grounded in the values of our community. Based on my experience working with him, I am confident that Patrick will serve with integrity and bring meaningful value to the Foundation.

For these reasons, I ask the Committee to confirm the nomination of Patrick Pihana Branco.

Mahalo for the opportunity to provide this testimony.

Michael J. Chun, PhD

April 22, 2026

Honorable Senator Chris Lee
Chair, Committee on Water, Land, Culture and the Arts
Hawai'i State Capitol Room 219
415 South Beretania Street
Honolulu, HI 96813

Aloha e Senator Lee,

Patrick Branco is before your committee for confirmation as a Commissioner for the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts. Via this letter, I am submitting my enthusiastic support for his confirmation.

An experienced diplomat and public servant, Patrick has lived and worked in different parts of the world, encountering people and events that have nurtured his interest in and appreciation for culture and the arts in all of its various forms. Through these experiences, Patrick has come to appreciate how culture and the arts can sometimes convey thoughts, ideas and values more powerfully than words, and serve as a catalyst for dialogue and conversations that bring people together, not push them apart.

Though not formally trained in culture and the arts, Patrick's world view, like for many of us who are of this place, has been influenced by the rich cultures and vibrant art forms that make Hawai'i so unique. Immersed in this diversity of traditions and mores, Patrick respects and values the role culture and the arts plays in enriching and deepening our lives. It is through this lived experience that Patrick has deepened his understanding of the vital role that culture and the arts play in a civilized society.

The Board of Commissioners for the State Foundation for Culture and the Arts is charged with carrying out the Foundation's mission, which is to promote, perpetuate and preserve culture and the arts in Hawai'i. Knowledge and experience are important qualifications for serving as a Commissioner, however, wisdom and judgement are critical attributes as well. Patrick meets these standards admirably and will bring another set of lenses in making acquisition decisions, along with an objective and unbiased mindset.

Mahalo nui loa for this opportunity to speak on behalf of Patrick Branco. His confirmation to the Board of Commissioners for the State Foundation on Culture will bring added value to this governing body and the State of Hawai'i will be well served by his service.

Me ka ha'aha'a,

Michael J. Chun, PhD

GM-769

Submitted on: 4/21/2026 10:25:41 PM

Testimony for WLA on 4/23/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Nahelani Parsons	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair and Members of the Committee,

I submit testimony in strong support of GM 769, recommending the confirmation of Patrick Branco to the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts.

Pat brings a grounded and thoughtful approach to leadership, shaped by both his service here at home and his broader public service experience. From his time in the Legislature to his work advancing sustainability and community partnerships in Hawai‘i, he has shown a real ability to bring people together and move meaningful work forward. He also brings a unique perspective from his international and cultural affairs experience, which I believe will add value to the Foundation’s work.

The State Foundation on Culture and the Arts plays an important role in ensuring access to arts and cultural opportunities statewide. Pat Branco’s leadership and perspective will help advance these efforts and strengthen the Foundation’s impact across all communities.

I respectfully urge the Committee to support GM 769.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.
Nahelani Parsons

GM-769

Submitted on: 4/22/2026 7:16:33 AM

Testimony for WLA on 4/23/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Dexter Lee	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

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

My name is Dexter Lee and I am a general dentist practicing on Oahu. Over the past two years, I have worked to integrate myself into the service of our community, volunteering with Aloha Medical Mission, participating in the Give Kids A Smile program, and serving with Ke Ola Mamo, Oahu’s Native Hawaiian health care system. I am writing today to express my strong support for the nomination of Patrick Branco to the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts (SFCA).

Through my work with Ke Ola Mamo and other local non-profits, I have seen the vital link between community health, cultural identity, and the arts. Patrick Branco inherently understands this connection. He is a leader who recognizes that preserving Hawaii’s culture is essential to the overall well-being of our people.

In my time knowing Patrick, I have been impressed by his dedication to public service and his ability to bridge diverse perspectives. He is someone who listens first and acts with a deep sense of kuleana. His integrity and vision make him an exceptional choice to help guide the future of arts and culture in our state.

I have full confidence that Patrick will serve the Foundation with excellence, and I respectfully urge the Committee to advise and consent to his nomination.

Mahalo for your time and for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

Dexter Lee, DDS

LATE

GM-769

Submitted on: 4/22/2026 5:12:36 PM
Testimony for WLA on 4/23/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Ryan Naka	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair and distinguished Committee Members,

I am writing today in strong support of the confirmation of Patrick Pihana Branco to the Board of Commissioners of the Hawai‘i State Foundation on Culture and the Arts (SFCA) for the term expiring June 30, 2030. As a resident of Honolulu who values the vital role that culture and the arts play in strengthening our communities, preserving our Native Hawaiian heritage, and enriching our collective identity, I believe Mr. Branco is exceptionally well-qualified to serve and will be a tremendous asset to the SFCA.

Patrick Pihana Branco is a proud Native Hawaiian born and raised in Kailua. A graduate of Kamehameha Schools, he was immersed from an early age in Hawaiian language, history, values, and traditions—including aloha, kuleana, and mālama. These foundational experiences, combined with his deep family ties to the land and community, have shaped a lifelong commitment to perpetuating and protecting Hawaiian culture. His public service record demonstrates this commitment time and again.

As a former Hawai‘i State Representative for District 50 (Kailua and Kāne‘ohe Bay), Mr. Branco actively supported legislation and resolutions advancing the arts and culture sector. He sponsored HB760 relating to the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts and co-sponsored measures calling for the continuation of the Creative Resurgence Task Force to foster creativity and innovation through the arts, culture, and humanities. He also participated in events such as Art at the Capitol, showcasing his personal engagement with artists and cultural practitioners. His legislative work on environmental protection further reflects an understanding that in Hawai‘i, caring for our natural resources is inseparable from preserving our cultural heritage.

Mr. Branco’s distinguished career as a U.S. diplomat—serving in Colombia, Pakistan, Venezuela, and Washington, D.C.—and his recent selection as the first Native Hawaiian White House Fellow bring a unique global perspective and proven leadership to the SFCA. He has built bridges across cultures, defended democratic values, and promoted cross-cultural understanding worldwide. These skills will be invaluable as the SFCA works to promote, perpetuate, and preserve the arts and culture of our diverse state while elevating Native Hawaiian arts and artists on the world stage.

The State Foundation on Culture and the Arts plays a critical role in funding artists, supporting public art, advancing arts education, and ensuring that Hawai‘i’s rich cultural tapestry remains

vibrant for future generations. Patrick Branco's combination of cultural grounding, legislative experience, international insight, and unwavering dedication to public service makes him the ideal candidate to help guide the SFCA in fulfilling its important mission.

I respectfully urge the Committee to favorably consider and confirm Patrick Pihana Branco to this important position. His appointment will bring dedicated, knowledgeable, and culturally rooted leadership to the Board at a time when support for the arts and culture is more essential than ever.

Mahalo nui loa for the opportunity to submit this testimony and for your service to the people of Hawai'i.

Sincerely,
Ryan Naka

LATE

GM-769

Submitted on: 4/22/2026 7:40:44 PM
Testimony for WLA on 4/23/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Sean Delaney	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I'm writing to express my strong support for Patrick Branco.

Patrick is deeply knowledgeable, thoughtful, and genuinely committed to preserving and uplifting Hawaiian arts and culture. He approaches decisions with care and integrity, always remaining mindful of his kuleana to the people and the 'āina.

What sets Patrick apart is not only his expertise, but his empathy and sense of responsibility. He listens, he understands, and he leads with purpose. His dedication to serving as a defender and champion of Hawaiian culture is clear in everything he does.

I believe he is an exceptional choice, and I offer my full support with confidence.