



SB283
RELATING TO THE HAWAII TOURISM AUTHORITY
Senate Committee on Judiciary and Labor

February 18, 2015

9:15 a.m.

Room 016

The Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA) offers the following **COMMENTS** on SB283, which seeks to clarify the qualifications of the Hawai'i Tourism Authority's (HTA's) Board of Directors, and amends language relating to the board member with a Hawaiian cultural background.

OHA notes that currently, the HTA Board of Directors is required to have "at least one" member with Hawaiian cultural knowledge, experience, and expertise. SB283 amends this language to simply state that "one member" of the board shall have Hawaiian cultural knowledge, background, and expertise. This wording change may suggest that the HTA board is limited to having only one member representing the Hawaiian culture. Given the importance of Hawaiian culture to the mission of the Authority, OHA believes that it may be more prudent to retain language stating that "at least one" member of the board shall have such cultural qualifications, rather than creating an ambiguity that may limit cultural representation on the HTA board. If a cultural expert also has knowledge, experience, and expertise as required to serve on the HTA, they should not be eliminated just because they are a cultural expert.

Mahalo nui for the opportunity to testify on this measure.