



Hawai'i Convention Center
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Governor

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President and Chief Executive Officer

Statement of
JOHN DE FRIES

Hawai'i Tourism Authority
before the
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON WATER
SENATE COMMITTEE ON LABOR, CULTURE AND THE ARTS

Monday, March 22, 2021
3:05 PM
State Capitol, Conference Room 225
via videoconference

In consideration of
SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 236
SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 196

Chair Taniguchi, Vice Chair Ihara, and members of the Committee on Labor, Culture and the Arts: the Hawai'i Tourism Authority (HTA) **supports** SCR236 / SR196, which urges United States President Joe Biden and the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) to hold the 2023 APEC summit in Honolulu, Hawai'i.

This conference, which brings together the heads of state from 21 countries in the Asia-Pacific region thousands of foreign diplomats, and support staff and media members from around the world, would give Hawai'i's visitor industry a much-needed boost as our state recovers from the devastating economic impacts of COVID-19.

Having successfully hosted APEC in 2011 and the World Conservation Congress of the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) in 2016, Hawai'i and the Hawai'i Convention Center established their ability to host large international meetings and conventions. Each of which brought the positive economic impacts and the lasting brand awareness that events of this magnitude bring. Hosting summits of this size and importance helped to spread the message that Hawai'i is not only a vacation spot, but it is also a world-class meeting and convention destination capable of hosting events of this caliber.

We appreciate the opportunity to provide testimony in **support** of SCR236 / SR196.