LATE TESTIMONY

Legislative Testimony

HCR117

REQUESTING THE CONVENING OF A HAWAIIAN CULTURAL RESOURCES WORKING GROUP TO DEVELOP AN ACTION PLAN FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT AND MAINTENANCE OF A COMPREHENSIVE HAWAIIAN CULTURAL RESOURCES INVENTORY DATABASE

House Committee on Hawaiian Affairs
House Committee on Cultural and the Arts

March 23, 2011 8:30 a.m. Room 329

The Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA) offers the following comments on HCR117, which requests OHA to convene a Hawaiian Cultural Resources Working Group to develop an action plan for the establishment and maintenance of a comprehensive Hawaiian cultural resources inventory database.

OHA understands the value of having a central database of cultural resources to help promote the unique Native Hawaiian heritage of Hawai'i to potential tourists around the world. Further, we acknowledge that this database would not only help tourists experience more authentic Hawaiian cultural activities, but it would also assist Native Hawaiian businesses expand their client-bases to include more visitors.

However, we have reservations about the resolution's request for OHA to convene the Hawaiian Cultural Resources Working Group. We note that the proposed Hawaiian cultural resources inventory database would serve a tourism purpose. As such, the Hawai'i Tourism Authority would be the most appropriate entity to take the lead in convening and administering the proposed working group. We note further that SB108 specifically directed the Hawai'i Tourism Authority to contract with a nonprofit organization such as the Native Hawaiian Hospitality Association to develop a cultural resources inventory database. OHA would certainly be interested in participating in the working group and collaborating with the Hawai'i Tourism Authority as the tourism agency leads this effort.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify on this important measure.

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As dean of the School of Travel Industry Management at the University of Hawaii at Manoa, I support HCR117 which proposes to establish a comprehensive Hawaiian cultural resources inventory database accessible to visitor industry providers, employees, visitors, cultural practitioners and residents. As such, it represents a logical extension for TIM School's previous partnerships with Native Hawaiian Hospitality Association (NaHHA) on several worthwhile projects, including the development of the Ola Hawai`i curriculum and training of 21 Hawaiian cultural tourism experts funded by federal grants. Another joint TIM-NaHHA project on a Hawaiian cultural bridge training program for Korean and Chinese travel agents funded by the Hawaii Tourism Authority was recently completed.

The TIM School has also incorporated Hawaiian cultural values into its curriculum. The original course on management by Hawaiian cultural values was taught by the late Dr. George Kanahele. The course has since been an integral part of TIM curriculum for the past decade in helping prepare TIM students to be sensitive and knowledgeable about host cultural values.

Dr. Kanehele called tourism "the keeper of the culture," but only if the authentic culture is nurtured in order to preserve a destination's "sense of place." Thus, this bill will help to ensure that the goal of cultural preservation is perpetuated by creating a much needed mechanism to steward our unique cultural resources for Hawaii tourism. It would make it easier for marketers to promote genuine cultural products, make quality cultural products more accessible to visitors, and promote authentic representations of Hawaiian culture by fostering pride and motivation among residents and youth.

Everyone in Hawaii has benefitted from a half century of Hawaii tourism, one of the best known tourism brands in the world because of its unique culture. But Hawaii is now a mature tourism destination that is subject to many forces of cultural erosion. Our research has shown that Hawaii residents value cultural tourism. Therefore, an investment in a cultural database will help perpetuate the essence of Hawaii tourism into the future. Consolidating and disseminating usable information will go a long way to strengthening the knowledge base of Hawaiian cultural resources statewide.

Thus, the TIM School would be pleased to collaborate with the other named agencies and relevant parties, since it would also be a valuable resource for our own curriculum, training programs and projects for students, faculty and professionals.

UNIVERSITY OF HAWAI'I SYSTEM

Legislative Testimony

LATE TESTIMONY

Written Testimony Presented Before the
House Committee on Hawaiian Affairs and
House Committee on Culture & the Arts
Wednesday, Mar. 23, 2011, 8:30 a.m.
By
Virginia S. Hinshaw, Chancellor
and
Juanita C. Liu, Interim Dean
School of Travel Industry Management (TIM)
University of Hawai'i at Mānoa

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Chairs Hanohano and Wooley and members of the committees, the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa supports this resolution.

HCR 117 proposes to establish a comprehensive Hawaiian cultural resources inventory accessible to visitor industry providers, employees, visitors, cultural practitioners and residents. As such, it represents a logical extension for TIM School's previous partnerships with Native Hawaiian Hospitality Association (NaHHA) on several worthwhile projects, including the development of the Ola Hawai'i curriculum and training of 21 Hawaiian cultural tourism experts funded by federal grants. Another joint TIM-NaHHA project on a Hawaiian cultural bridge training program for Korean and Chinese travel agents funded by the Hawai'iTourism Authority was recently completed.

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OFFICE OF HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS
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