



**TESTIMONY OF
THE STATE FOUNDATION ON CULTURE AND THE ARTS
TO THE COMMITTEE ON VETERANS, MILITARY, & INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS, &
CULTURE AND THE ARTS**

**March 21, 2016
H.C.R.128/H.R.81**

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**REQUESTING THE LEGISLATIVE REFERENCE BUREAU TO CONDUCT A SURVEY
AND EVALUATION OF ARTIST RELOCATION PROGRAMS AND THEIR POTENTIAL
FOR CREATION IN THE STATE OF HAWAII**

Chair Ito and members of the Committee, I am Jonathan Johnson, Executive Director of the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts (SFCA), and I am pleased to testify in support of HCR128/HR81.

Nationwide there are a variety of examples of creative district programs that incentivize local communities to use arts venues, businesses, and activities to create or enhance economic opportunities. Creative districts are appealing places to live, visit, and conduct business, which in turn enhance the economic and civic vitality of a community.

Creative districts help revitalize communities by increasing livability, attracting artists and creative entrepreneurs. Creative districts form clusters of economic activity, showcasing cultural and artistic organizations, events, and amenities. Often, creative districts encourage the redevelopment of blighted areas and leverage funding for additional resources and partnerships.

Creating and preserving affordable live and work housing for artists, so artists can stay in the neighborhoods they help renew is an important ingredient in establishing creative districts. HCR 128/81 is a step toward understanding what other communities are doing so we can make educated choices to ensure our enriched communities are sustainable.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this matter.

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Written Testimony

HCR128

REQUESTING THE LEGISLATIVE REFERENCE BUREAU TO CONDUCT A SURVEY AND EVALUATION OF ARTIST RELOCATION PROGRAMS AND THEIR POTENTIAL FOR CREATION IN THE STATE OF HAWAII

Testimony by the Legislative Reference Bureau
Charlotte A. Carter-Yamauchi, Acting Director

Presented to the House Committee on Veterans, Military, & International Affairs, & Culture
and the Arts

Monday, March 21, 2016, 9:00 a.m.
Conference Room 321

Chair Ito and Members of the Committee:

Good morning Chair Ito and members of the Committee, my name is Charlotte Carter-Yamauchi and I am the Acting Director of the Legislative Reference Bureau. Thank you for providing the opportunity to submit written comments on H.C.R. No. 128, Requesting the Legislative Reference Bureau to Conduct a Survey and Evaluation of Artist Relocation Programs and Their Potential for Creation in the State of Hawaii.

The purpose of this measure, among other things, is to request that the Legislative Reference Bureau:

- (1) Conduct a survey and evaluation of artist relocation programs and the potential for creation of such a program in the State of Hawaii; and
- (2) Report its findings and recommendations, including any proposed legislation, to the Legislature no later than twenty days before the convening of the Regular Session of 2017.

While the Legislative Reference Bureau takes no position on the measure, we submit the following comments for your consideration.

As a general matter, we note that the measure cites:

- (1) The City of Paducah's "artist relocation program" as a national model for using the arts for economic development and fostered an environment where artists and the arts could flourish;
- (2) The goals of Paducah's artist relocation program were to revitalize one of Paducah's most historic neighborhoods through the arts, accomplished by the city's offering properties at little cost in return for agreement with various conditions of renovation and basing entrepreneurial activities in the arts at the properties located in the model art district community--a place to create, live, and work; and
- (3) That private-public partnering was a critical element in the success of the Paducah artist relocation program, which involved innovative financing arrangements with community partner banks for the artists/residents, and public incentives including low cost property sales and zoning accommodations through the city planning department.

Based on the description provided in the measure, it seems that the City of Paducah had specific areas within its jurisdiction that it had identified for its artist relocation program.

As drafted, the measure does not seem to provide enough guidance regarding:

- (1) Specific areas that the State feels is in need of redevelopment as an artist relocation neighborhood;
- (2) The parameters that are to be used by the Bureau to evaluate whether such an artist relocation program would be deemed feasible or desirable; and
- (3) The qualifiers by which areas in the State should be evaluated (e.g., crime rates, property values, infrastructure needs, etc.) in order to determine if the area could benefit from establishing an artist relocation program;

If the Legislature feels that this survey and evaluation should be conducted, then the Bureau respectfully requests that the measure be amended to provide more specific guidance on the issues noted above so that the Bureau may be able to provide the Legislature with the information it needs to make sound policy decisions on this matter.

Thank you again for your consideration.