



HAWAI'I LODGING & TOURISM
A S S O C I A T I O N

June 6, 2018

The Honorable David Y. Ige
Governor of Hawai'i
Executive Chambers
State Capitol
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96813

Dear Governor Ige:

The members of the Hawai'i Lodging & Tourism Association support the homelessness initiative proposed in House Bill 2010, H.D. 1, S.D. 2, C.D. 1, and strongly encourage you to approve this measure.

The HLTA is the largest private sector visitor industry organization in the islands with nearly 700 members, 170 of which are hotels managing 50,500 rooms.

House Bill 2010 contains a number of provisions relating to the allocation of revenues for tourism-related programs. Our interest is in Section 4, which states that \$1 million from the general fund will be allocated to the Hawai'i Tourism Authority to implement initiatives to address homelessness in tourism and resort areas, in cooperation with the Hawai'i Lodging and Tourism Association, with the state's money matched dollar-for-dollar by the private sector.

Homelessness across the state has been a major concern of the visitor industry, particularly in areas like Waikiki and public parks and beaches. The hospitality industry, through our association and member hotels and businesses, has donated well over \$2 million during the last four years to the Institute for Human Services (IHS) and other social service agencies on our largest islands, specifically for homelessness outreach and service. These funds have come from a collaborative effort put forth by the hospitality industry which include monies from our charity walks on Oahu, Hawai'i Island, Kaua'i, and Maui as well as funds raised from the Hilton Hawaiian Village's Hawai'i for Hawai'i Benefit Concert. Agencies and charitable non-profits that have had direct impact from these donations include Helping Hands Hawai'i, Honolulu Community Action Program, Waikiki Health, Catholic Charities Hawai'i, and Mental Health Kokua. Specifically speaking, we have developed a very productive partnership with the IHS, which helps the

homeless in Waikiki, including outreach efforts, repatriation and van transportation so they can access vital services. As a result of our firm belief that homelessness is not just a Honolulu-centric challenge, we also gave grants to non-profits on each of the neighbor island counties. Last year we contributed \$10,000 to HOPE Services Hawai'i Inc. and \$15,000 to Hawai'i Rise Foundation to help fund homelessness programs on Hawai'i Island. In 2016 we awarded Kaua'i Economic Opportunity \$25,000, and Maui Family Life Center \$25,000 the year before to help make repatriating homeless back to their families or caregivers on the mainland an objective. We will continue to provide much needed resources to our homelessness service providers, and hope to do even more with the state's matching funds.

While the bill does call for tourism marketing funds to be diverted for a number of other purposes, and we have long-considered these funds to be sacrosanct, we also believe that state support for homelessness services will directly benefit the visitor industry and so we support this measure.

Mahalo for your consideration.

Sincerely,

HLTA Executive Officers & Chapter Chairpersons:



Mufi Hannemann
President & CEO



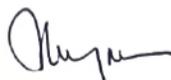
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