

HB-1286

Submitted on: 2/5/2021 4:25:21 PM

Testimony for PDP on 2/9/2021 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
James E Raymond	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

As a retired Deputy Attorney General, I can tell you this bill has a number of flaws, primarily in the form of ambiguities and unanticipated consequences. But more importantly, it forces Kauai to follow the unSafe Travels program that has already been found to cause significant problems for that island -- why in the world would you want to spoil the only safe harbor in Hawaii?

This bill would also remove the option for any other Mayor that decides to opt out of the unSafe Travels program. The bill represents the worst kind of special interest micro-managing by the legislature and ruins the ability of the Governor to react quickly and decisively to the pandemic - please kill this bill.

Aloha,

Please do not approve HB 1286, a bill that seeks to impose a single set of travel rules on a county that has successfully kept its Covid rates low, and has the data to show that their brief participation in the Safe Travels pre-test out of quarantine program greatly increased their case rate. To pass this bill would undermine the clear will of the majority of Kauai voters as expressed via their elected leaders. Kauai followed the rules and asked permission from the Governor for separated protocols. He did not approve the post test system they wanted, but did approve the county withdrawing from the "Safe Travels" program, and they chose this. Why should the Legislature insert itself into this process? It seems like an anti-democratic move. While reasonable people can disagree on the best balance of public health and economic needs, and therefore everyone on Kauai will not agree with their county's position, it appears that someone in the business community is attempting an end run around the process by going to the Legislature. Do not make the mistake of inserting yourselves into this complex mix.

Personally, I wish all counties could do a post test on day 3 to 5 after arrival (as recommended by the CDC) - but we were told early on that there was not enough testing capacity in the state to do this. Is that still the case? And should it be considered with the new variant strains on the rise?

If the concern is that different travel rules confuse travelers, anyone traveling right now should expect chaos and confusion. This is not a normal time, visitors who are traveling for vacation are already risk takers who are choosing the risks of traveling during a global pandemic, and one of those is constant change and the need to be flexible. We should not coddle them, or sacrifice the health of residents to accommodate them. In fact, I suggest Hawaii pivot towards seeking wealthier travelers for the near future, those who can afford a quarantine stay.

Kauai should not be treated as naughty child, but as an example for other counties to at least consider. Please do not pass this bill out of committee.

Mahalo

Doris Segal Matsunaga
Retired health professional
'Aiea, Hawai'i

HB-1286

Submitted on: 2/6/2021 5:32:03 AM

Testimony for PDP on 2/9/2021 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Steven J Starr	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

To the Honorable Hawaii State Representatives --

We would like to introduce ourselves during these trying times, to add our voices to the concerns expressed by many Kauai businesses respecting the viability of their enterprises under the current travel restrictions. Our family lives in Texas, and we have owned a two-week interest at the Waiohai Beach Club in Koloa for fourteen years. We enjoy visiting Kauai every few years, which has truly become a home away from home. That pleasant fiction is more important than ever these days.

This June we are scheduled to return to Kauai, and truly relish the prospect of visiting the island that we love so much. This year is particularly important as we are being joined by our oldest son who recently graduated college -- the trip is actually a belated graduation trip which we were unable to enjoy last summer due to the pandemic.

Unfortunately, we are significantly concerned in light of Kauai County's decision to opt out of quarantine exceptions that have been adopted by neighboring islands. The preservation of the health and safety of every community is obviously paramount, and to that end the state has adopted rules to provide adequate protections. Like so many others, our family practices safe protocols on a daily basis. We stay in our home, don't dine inside restaurants and wear masks at all times when away from our house. We have each also received COVID vaccines, but our two sons may not have by June -- as they are not in a priority group.

Our family continues to be deeply invested in the Kauai community, and will remain so for years to come. We respect its opt-out decision, and understand it. While we desperately hope to be able to return in June and safely celebrate on the beautiful island with our family -- and help promote the local economy -- unless we are permitted a quarantine exemption based on either vaccination or a pre-travel negative COVID-19 test, a 10-day in-room quarantine would effectively destroy any reason to travel.

We will have to make a decision to either keep or cancel our travel dates prior to the second week of April, and our hope is that Kauai will have relaxed its rules well before then. Hopefully the rules governing travel to Kauai will evolve by April (when we have to make our final "go / no-go" travel decision) -- to take into consideration **both** negative

tests as well as vaccinations for quarantine exemptions. We simply can't travel if our sons are quarantined, even though we may be exempted.

Thank you for your time.

Steven J. Starr

sstarr@sjs-law.com

214-280-4700

Alicia L. Starr, MD

aliciastarr66@gmail.com

214-280-8700

HB-1286

Submitted on: 2/6/2021 7:00:48 AM

Testimony for PDP on 2/9/2021 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Rolando Cordova	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I've been following Kauai's COVID-19 restrictions and cases since this all began. I have always been supportive of the way Kauai has handle this pandemic until the last couple emergencies proclamations.

I was always pro pre travel test and post travel test until the rule changed allowing only to quarantine on a resort bubble to post travel test. It's seem from the latest cases that resident and some visitor are not pre testing since they will be force to quarantine, specially residents. I understands that hotels made an investment purchasing this equipment and they have to make some money back, but prices for people to quarantine at resort bubble it's high and this is not even counting the post travel test.

I'm also a second home/ vacation rental owner in Kauai and I have been in a lot of hardship due to lost of income. I have pending business to take care of in Kauai and I have not been able to do so because of the travel restriction. I made the decision to come to Kauai staying 4 days in Oahu a re test to be able to go to Kauai without quarantining, this option was actually cheaper than staying at a resort bubble.

Letting people come with a pending test was the issue with the safe travels program. The Mayor never gave enough time to that change before you pulled out of the program. Now people are allow to do so if they come to a Resort bubble, putting in danger people in the airport, airplane, transportation staff, hotel staff and other guest at the hotel. This new rule seems counterproductive.

This weeks a was surprise that the Mayor presented date comparing occupancy percentage, when we know that information is only for hotels and not thousands of vacation rentals units. He try to make it seems like Kauai occupancy was similar to other island, when we know that is not realistic.

To this day, the mayor has failed present a plan to move forward. It's great that Kauai has almost 0 actives cases, but also there is a need to balance how things are being done. Hopefully a statewide approach will be next steps, to avoid confusion and be able to get back to some kind of normal.

Thank you for your time
Rolando Cordova

HB-1286

Submitted on: 2/6/2021 9:03:20 AM

Testimony for PDP on 2/9/2021 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
RobertAnn K Goias	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

I am against this bill. Being that I live on the island of Kauai we are the safest of all the islands due to our wonderful mayor and the choices he has made for our island!

HB-1286

Submitted on: 2/6/2021 9:48:58 AM

Testimony for PDP on 2/9/2021 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Beth N. Carvin	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

2/6/21

To whom it may concern:

I submit this testimony to oppose HB1286.

While I appreciate the bill originator's intent on getting consistency across the state, we have seen over the last 10 months that one-size does not fit all in regard to pandemic response.

As a 10-year resident of Kauai and 20-year's prior to that on Oahu, I've seen the difference in healthcare capabilities and ohana style community. On Oahu, we have some of the finest hospitals, much bed space, and many doctors, nurses and other health professionals. On Kauai we have the excellent Wilcox hospital, with 7-8 ICU beds, a handful of ventilators and health professionals that were already overworked prior to the pandemic.

In addition, Kauai is a close knit community where severe illness and death for residents are not just numbers, they are neighbors.

Because of the above two factors, Kauai's mayor has worked extra diligently with the outstanding Dr. Janet Berreman, Kauai district health officer, to create a science and medical driven response to the pandemic that meets Kauai's unique needs.

Additionally, Mayor Kawakami is not blind to economics. His experience as a businessperson in the private sector has made him keenly aware of the need to ensure that he not only keeps people safe, he also keeps people fed and creates creative solution for employment and cautiously re-vitalizing the visitor industry amidst the current conditions.

As a business owner, I have been the recipient of the creative solutions Mayor Kawakami and his economic team (made up of business community leaders) created. The "Rise to Work" Kauai program allowed us to employ multiple people using CARES ACT funding.

Even better, Kauai's unique "bubble resort" program has allowed the county to bring back visitors in a way that works safely for this county. Economically speaking, the data speaks for itself. The visitor occupancy rate for Kauai was just hair lower than that of Oahu's. With the bubble resort program newly underway, it's possible that Kauai's solutions might yield even greater success than Oahu moving forward.

So the question becomes, when a county is proving to be highly effective in terms of health and safety and is also re-building its economy in a way that works for its unique location, what benefit is there in preventing it from continuing to do so?

It's hard to describe how it good it feels to live in a county that is the safest community in perhaps the entire country, with no community spread of COVID-19. Sitting in your seats on Oahu it's probably easy to think that Kauai should be like Oahu. That it is just fine. You have become used to hearing 100+ people diagnosed each day. You have become used to hearing about deaths each day.

If Kauai was failing in its COVID response, I would welcome the opportunity for the state to come in and help put standards in place. But whereas Kauai is succeeding, I implore you to please not take away Kauai's ability to work with the Governor to approve measures that work for this community.

Thank you very much.

B. N. Carvin
CEO, Nobsot Corporation
Kilauea, HI 96754

HB-1286

Submitted on: 2/6/2021 11:01:38 AM

Testimony for PDP on 2/9/2021 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
CARLA J KELLER	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Hello - My family is in complete support of unifying travel restrictions and policies for the entire state. I grew up on Kauai (in Hanapepe) and we live in Kapaa part time now for the last 5 years. Kauai's travel restrictions and resort bubbles have devastated the island's economy and the Houseless population is out of control. Kauai County has created a catastrophic situation that will turn Kauai neighborhoods into depressed barrios. Only the super rich and very poor people will remain - the middle class will be gone. Businesses are closed all over the island. The Mayor's closed-door policies are a down-right criminal abuse of Federal Funds. PLEASE PLEASE PLEASE have Kauai rejoin the safe travels program and get rid of this extremely one-sided resort Bubble program (that only serves wealthy Hotel corporations.) Kauai has had one Covid related death of an older gentleman who refused ICU care. The Kauai rules are wildly out of control and one-sided with no consideration for what they're doing to the local economy. Kauai is also gaining a very bad reputation as a unwelcoming Travel destination that HATES tourists. Its reasonable to move away from such a dependence on Tourism, but that plan will take time and needs to be well-thought out. This drastic Economic shift is a travesty. Thank you very much for your consideration.

HB-1286

Submitted on: 2/6/2021 12:43:07 PM

Testimony for PDP on 2/9/2021 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Lisa Wegner	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Thank you for your consideration of our testimony on HB 1286. We support this measure. There is too much conflict among islands resulting from too much unilateral authority held at the mayoral level. The result of the inconsistencies results in massive confusion for travelers--residents and visitors alike. These inconsistencies, coupled with Kauai's all but complete shut down of tourism, has catastrophically harmed countless small business owners, including ourselves--not just on Kauai, but with its ripple effect to all islands. The Safe Travels Program requirements that Oahu, Maui and Hawaii have implemented strikes a fair balance between allowing our residents to stay healthy and keeping our economy alive. Having consistency implemented at a higher level allows this plan to be vetted, studied and reported by the collective, rather than by the whim and fear instilling message of a handful. While each island has its own concerns, to be sure, those concerns never came to pass even when all islands were operating under the Safe Travels Program. We are one State and should act accordingly.

HB-1286

Submitted on: 2/6/2021 1:55:49 PM

Testimony for PDP on 2/9/2021 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Stephen Drake	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha Representatives,

We wish to show our support for all islands having consistent visitation rules. It is just too confusing for all when islands have different policies. We need our economy back and of course we need to be sensible on risk abatement.

It just makes sense.

Mahalo,

Stephen and Lois Drake

HB-1286

Submitted on: 2/6/2021 2:34:39 PM

Testimony for PDP on 2/9/2021 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
I. Sam-Vargas	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

DO NOT SUPPORT HB 1286

I am a resident of Kauai and I am vehemently opposed to this bill.

To have one statewide plan for COVID travel is shortsighted and not good governance. How can all counties be treated the same when they are not vaguely similar in size and medical resources? Oahu has more than 13 1/2 times the number of people that Kauai has. It is classified as a large urban city while Kauai is more of a rural community with less people and with limited medical resources. Even Maui, whose population is closest to that of Kauai is more than 2 times its size.

Do the right thing and continue to let counties determine what is best for them. Afterall, all counties are united in their goal: Get back to business as soon as possible while keeping its citizens safe. Just our strategies differ and are tailored to our own needs.

Do not loose sight of the big picture. Non essential travel during covid is NOT recommended.

Thank you for your consideration.



February 9, 2021

The Honorable Linda Ichiyama, Chair
The Honorable Stacelynn K.M. Eli, Vice Chair
House Committee on Pandemic & Disaster Preparedness

The Honorable Richard H.K. Onishi, Chair
The Honorable Jackson D. Sayama, Vice Chair
House Committee on Labor & Tourism

Re: HB 1286 – Relating to Health

Dear Chair Ichiyama, Chair Onishi, Vice Chair Eli, Vice Chair Sayama, and Committee Members:

Hawaii Medical Service Association (HMSA) appreciates the opportunity to testify on HB 1286, which exempts any person from the post-arrival mandatory self-quarantine if the person receives a negative test result prior to arrival. It also allows DOH to establish conditions for exemption, requires certain COVID-19 tests for travelers who do not have a test result upon arrival to avoid mandatory self-quarantine, and requires any person who receives a positive test for COVID-19 post-arrival to be responsible for all costs associated with that person's mandatory self-quarantine. It repeals on 12/31/2021.

HMSA appreciates the intent of this measure and we are supportive of efforts to safely allow for the reopening of Hawaii's economy. The efforts of this bill will contribute to the collaborative efforts within our State to continue the recovery of public health.

Thank you for allowing us to testify on HB 1286. Your consideration of our comments is appreciated.

Sincerely,

Matthew W. Sasaki
Director, Government Relations

HB-1286

Submitted on: 2/6/2021 3:21:00 PM

Testimony for PDP on 2/9/2021 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Joel Peterson	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I support HB1286 100%

It's time we have one set of rules. On Kauai we have been devastated by the Mayor and his plan to keep us in a bubble with no resolution in site. The Regular Safe travels program is already intrusive enough and we need to find a balance of staying safe while giving our family and friends a fighting chance to get the economy going.

Kauai is crumbling and it will take years and years to ever recover.

I 100% support HB1286

Thank you
Joel Peterson
Big Pono 201 LLC

HB-1286

Submitted on: 2/6/2021 3:44:43 PM

Testimony for PDP on 2/9/2021 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Jennifer Rothe	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

To whom it may concern:

I live on Kaua'i and have been in full support of Mayor Kawakami's swift and decisive measures to protect our island during this pandemic. "One size fits all" legislation regarding the pandemic is inappropriate for this state if it means we are all to follow O'ahu's example. The only way I would feel comfortable supporting such a measure is if the appropriate conservative measures are taken (e.g., basing statewide on Kaua'i standards rather than the other way around).

HB-1286

Submitted on: 2/6/2021 3:49:12 PM

Testimony for PDP on 2/9/2021 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Jed Stevens	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

We usually visit Kauai 4-5 times per year, and spend roughly a month of time on island per year. During that time, we patronize local restaurants, grocery stores, tour operators as well as coffee shops and equipment rental companies. During this past year that the pandemic has shut down Kauai's economy, we have been prevented from coming and supporting the local economy, as have many other travelers like us.

The discrepancy between the rules on Kauai and the rules between the other islands have made the prospect of traveling daunting at best, and prohibitive at worst. It does not make sense for the same situation to be handled differently on different islands. In order for us and many other travelers to have confidence traveling to Hawaii again, the rules need to be consistent, both across the islands and not subject to change as rapidly as has happened over the past 9 months.

HB-1286

Submitted on: 2/6/2021 4:04:28 PM

Testimony for PDP on 2/9/2021 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Joshua Manini	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

Aloha, I oppose HB1286.

Here on Kaua'i we are the farthest from the mainland (North America) and we don't have as much resources (medical) as other islands. Because we are the farthest from the mainland, this means we get supplies much later than the rest of the islands if not last. An example is hurricane Iniki. Kaua'i was hit hard and had minimum resources on island. We don't want to be placed in this kind of situation again. We have a vast majority of Kupuna on Kaua'i who don't want to get vaccinated including family of my own.

In the future we may become more independent. As of now we are NOT ready for a Bill in this such.

Our communities health is in your decision making. You need to protect our people, protect our community. Choose wisely.

Mahalo for your time,
Joshua

HB-1286

Submitted on: 2/6/2021 4:21:27 PM

Testimony for PDP on 2/9/2021 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Laura Gosch	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Thank you for the opportunity. I own 3 vacation rental condos in Poipu, Kauai. The abrupt decision by Kawakami to take Kauai out of Safe Travels has been devastating. I have lost every booked rental, many of whom were annual visitors that would stay 6 weeks at a time. The capricious decisions of Kawakami to reward Bubble hotels and completely shut of thousands of vacation rentals is frightening. There is no explanation for his behavior, other than to instill fear in his residents. This insanity must end. No regional mayor should have the power to shut down an entire island economy indefinitely. I fear that many of the condo complexes and shopping areas will stop maintenance, and our once beautiful town of Poipu and Koloa will crumble like Coco Palms.

HB-1286

Submitted on: 2/6/2021 4:24:37 PM

Testimony for PDP on 2/9/2021 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Shannon Rudolph	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

Oppose. Mayors should have some authority on their respective islands.

Testimony from Jenna W

2/6/21

To whom it may concern:

I submit this testimony to Oppose HB1286.

For the last 25 years Ive been involved in infectious disease and cancer research, Alzheimer's work, and earlier spent 5 years at an international vaccine-focused company. I feel well positioned to comment as someone who resides in Kauai, interacts daily with people elsewhere and as someone with a healthcare background.

I was part of a virtual Covid conference 2 weeks ago w NIAID – it's clear that: as a planet, Covid is still winning, the new variants are a major concern and the only way out of this is via immunity. Unless Kauai wants to open the floodgates to new cases – as we saw happen this Fall – and then go through the whole process of lockdowns again – we've got to WAIT.

The current system in Kauai, let's call it the 'Safer Travels Program' - is working. Now is not the time to open the floodgates. We must wait until all those who want vaccinations have gotten them. Anything else and the entire healthcare/research community will be looking at Oahu forcing Kauai's hand on a matter of disease containment - as highly irresponsible.

There are economic issues – I'm not blind to these, at all, but unemployment payments have been extended, and stimulus monies look to be coming through. As well, if we have high case counts, we risk lockdown and that means no businesses operating – not for the residents or the tourists, zero.

Nearly every other country in the world, France, Germany, UK, Caribes, currently has both: strict lockdowns and has a mandated 10-14 day quarantine for travelers. Many US states incl NY, NJ,CA,CO etc also have quarantine processes in place for incoming travelers.

What Kauai is doing in terms of process is much less restrictive than other places and is now effectively allowing travel while keeping cases off the island. Many people are graduating out of the resort bubble program or are coming from other islands and thrilled to be here. People can enjoy bars, restaurants, sports – really a relatively normal life.

What's notable is that Kauai's very low Covid case count is a key selling point for visitors, people want to escape the anxiety on the mainland and other places. And the fact that Kauai has so few/zero cases thereby bringing the Hawaiian case positivity % down, helps All of Hawaii be regarded as a Safe Place to Travel. In fact it's a major public relations boost – people should start to recognize how advantageous this can be.

We are just months away from everyone who wants a vaccination being able to get one – now is NOT the TIME to interfere with the system that is proven to be working well or aim to override Mayor Kawakami's decisions for Kauai.

As noted, for Oahu and other legislators aiming to enact regulations that would increase the Covid count on this island seems unconscionable and should be a non-starter. I believe such a move would be met with incredulity from the world's healthcare community focused on stopping transmission.

JW

HB-1286

Submitted on: 2/6/2021 8:15:11 PM

Testimony for PDP on 2/9/2021 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Vanessa George	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

To Whom It May Concern,

As a resident of the state of Hawaii, living on the Big Island Of Hawaii, I support HB1286 relating to travel in that every island should have the same set of Covid related travel rules regarding testing and quarantine for inter-island travellers, and that all islands have the same set of Covid related travel rules regarding testing and quarantine for off island/mainland/international travelers.

This will make it easier and more enticing for travelers to plan to come to Hawaii, which supports our Hawaiian economy that is so reliant upon the travel industry, and to make it easier for residents of Hawaii to do inter-island travel which is badly needed for a wide variety of reasons from business to personal to medical, etc.

Please support our local economy and people by passing Bill 1286.

Mahalo

Vanessa George

HB-1286

Submitted on: 2/6/2021 8:54:44 PM

Testimony for PDP on 2/9/2021 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Helena Rachner	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

How many more Honolulu centric policies do we need? The blatant disregard for the different needs and circumstances of the neighbor-island communities is astonishing. I oppose strongly HB 1286.

HB-1286

Submitted on: 2/6/2021 9:54:00 PM

Testimony for PDP on 2/9/2021 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Mark Olson	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

Each county should be allowed to establish its own travel rules related to COVID-19. Kaua'i chose to opt out of the Safe Travels program because it was obviously not working well. When it started, cases began to rise here, but after we opted out, our case count went down and has been lower than all of the other counties ever since. Our children are able to attend school in person because we chose to opt out. Keeping the infection count down so that our children can keep attending school in person should be a priority that isn't sacrificed. Furthermore, I currently run a business that can plan effectively because I can trust that we will keep the infection count low on Kauai, but I would lose my ability to plan effectively if this bill was passed because the infection counts would rise and become more volatile. My livelihood depends on Kauai's rules being preserved. Please oppose this bill and allow each county to make its own decision.

February 6, 2021

Testimony in opposition to HB 1286, Relating to Travel

Honorable Chair Ichiyama and Chair Onishi and members of the Pandemic and Disaster Preparedness and Labor and Tourism Committees:

I am writing in opposition to HB 1286, Relating to Travel.

While economic health is important, even more than the economy, people depend on their government to take the steps that will protect the public health. And as these past months have demonstrated, until public health issues and COVID-19 are addressed, the economy cannot truly recover.

With this in mind, HB 1286 presents several concerns.

First, section 1(b) of this bill would codify practices, which even now, do not reflect the latest guidance for safe travel. Please see for example, the CDC guidance at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/travelers/testing-air-travel.html>.

However, greater concern lies in the sweeping provisions of section 1(a) of the bill which require that the travel protocols in 1(b) precede and preempt all other laws, ordinances, rules, orders, or proclamations. Section 1(a) provides:

Notwithstanding chapter 127A or any other law to the contrary, this Act shall take precedence over all conflicting statutes concerning this subject matter and shall preempt all contrary laws, ordinances, rules, orders, or proclamations adopted by the State, a county, or any department or agency thereof.

Under this section, the worry is that as COVID-19 and circumstances change, we may be locked into a protocol that is insufficient to protect the public health and lead to economic recovery. One consequence of section 1(a) is that counties will no longer have the flexibility to adjust their travel requirements to better protect their communities.

At present, the statewide requirements have provided for a floor, setting a level of protection across the state, but allowing a county, such as Kauai, to provide more protection with the governor's approval. This has allowed Kauai to stay at

relatively low rates of infection and limit community spread. In contrast, Maui has gone from relatively few cases prior to October 15, to consistently higher numbers since then.

If this bill is passed, all counties will be tied to the protocols in the bill and Kauai will no longer be able to continue the practices that have kept its people safer.

But perhaps more troubling is the possibility that this bill will take away flexibility from even state leaders to address a changing landscape. The language of section 1(a) of the bill appears to take away even the governor's emergency powers to adjust the travel protocols through emergency proclamation.

Our understanding of COVID-19 and how to protect against its transmission has been evolving over time. Now, we also see that the virus itself is changing and new variants, including the highly contagious UK variant, are coming into the state. It is therefore critical to maintain the ability to respond quickly to address the transmission of COVID-19. As our understanding of COVID-19 continues to develop, it would be unwise to lock ourselves into travel protocols that might no longer reflect scientific advice and that could harm the health of our people and state.

For these reasons, I oppose this bill and I urge you to carefully consider, with the advice of your attorneys and health experts, if this bill will achieve what is best for our state. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,
Lynn Otaguro
Oahu, Hawaii

HB-1286

Submitted on: 2/6/2021 10:59:02 PM

Testimony for PDP on 2/9/2021 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Angelina Kays	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

I believe that it is in the best interest for the people of Kauai for the power to opt out of the Safe Travels program remain with the individual Mayors. Our Mayor has done a fantastic job of safeguarding our community. When the number of cases began to increase when travel opened he quickly came up with a plan that decreased those numbers. Now that the vaccines are being administered there is no reason to rush the process of opening up travel once again. Our community, our kupuna and families are much more important to safeguard. Finding a way to work with the community is at the forefront of our Mayor's plan for opening up to tourists. I know people are anxious to open back up but we saw the numbers increase with travel and a majority of the cases of COVID are travel related, this tells us where it is coming from so why make changes when what we are doing is working. The Safe Travels option has not worked for other islands and it will not work for us. It's better to open slowly, with a good plan to be safe rather than to overwhelm our resources. I know some people think it's a hoax which fortunately for them they have not had a close relative or friend diagnosed with COVID and seen the ugly reality. I have not been so fortunate. I know it is not a hoax. I have seen the reality and for those who continue to say it's not as serious as the media makes it out to be you are blissfully unaware of the severity of the virus. We have that luxury living on Kauai. We can continue to live in relative unawareness of the severity if we continue to live with the safeguards we have thus far. This is why I am against HB12186. Safe Travels is NOT safe. It is too soon. We have a vaccine now and soon enough things will be safer.

HB-1286

Submitted on: 2/7/2021 3:11:44 AM

Testimony for PDP on 2/9/2021 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Albert Lopez	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

Aloha,

I strongly oppose HB1286 because I feel that individual counties should have the ability to decide what is best for their island and citizens in regards to safety and the COVID-19 pandemic. I believe that the individual counties can adapt more quickly to the challenges brought about by the global pandemic.

Mahalo for your support and consideration,

Small Business owner,

Albert lopez

HB-1286

Submitted on: 2/7/2021 4:55:10 AM

Testimony for PDP on 2/9/2021 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
jeanne ferrari-amas	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I support a consistent State wide approach to Safe Travel. I am a Kauai resident who wants Kauai to rejoin Safe Travels. Kauai needs to be open to visitors ,resident that travel are being held hostage to Kauai's current program. Most residents opposing Safe Travels are retired and their income dies not depend on tourism.

HB-1286

Submitted on: 2/7/2021 6:43:57 AM

Testimony for PDP on 2/9/2021 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Melissa Lahti	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

Each individual island has different needs and should not be a one rule for all!

For instance, Kauai has a very limited hospital capacity! Especially limited respiratory doctors! Kauai also has lowest number of covid infections of the major islands. From the studies done by Hawaii Tourism the economic impact on the islands has been pretty equal! Kauai has been doing an excellent job keeping the numbers low! If anything the other islands should follow Kauai's lead and request a second test!



February 6, 2021

Representative Richard Onishi, Chair
House Committee of Labor and Tourism
Representative Linda Ichiyama, Chair
House Committee on Pandemic and Disaster Preparedness

Support for HB1286

Dear Representative Onishi, Representative Ichiyama and Members of the House Committees on Labor and Tourism and Pandemic and Disaster Preparedness,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments on HB1286.

The Kohala Coast Resort Association supports the efforts to clarify and streamline the testing procedures for Hawaii's Safe Travels program. Since the program began, we have seen firsthand the impacts to visitors, who went through all of the required processes with pre-arrival testing to begin their travels to Hawaii, and who through no fault of their own, did not receive their results in time and were told they had to comply with the mandatory 10-day quarantine. We believe the additional screening procedures will help keep our community safe, and provide continuity in processes between the islands.

We understand and share the concerns of elected officials and the public that community safety is our first priority. We believe these processes will keep our community safe, while allowing us to rebuild the state's economic driver.

KCRA is a collection of master-planned resorts and hotels, situated north of the Ellison Onizuka Kona International Airport at Keahole, which represents more than 3,500 hotel and timeshare accommodations and an equal number of resort residential units. This is approximately 35 percent of the visitor accommodations available on the Island of Hawai'i. KCRA member properties annually pay more than \$25 million in TAT, \$25 million in GET and \$11 million in property taxes.

Mahalo for your consideration and support for this measure.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Stephanie P. Donoho".

Stephanie Donoho
Administrative Director

HB-1286

Submitted on: 2/7/2021 7:53:48 AM

Testimony for PDP on 2/9/2021 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Lisa Steele	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Thank you for allowing me to testify. I own a vacation rental property on Kauai. My business helps to support the economy on Kauai. My guests eat in local restaurants, buy gifts for friends and families from local businesses, participate in local activities and buy groceries in local grocery stores. Without the guests of the vacation rental industry, many, many businesses are closed. The homeless population has increased to new record highs. People are loosing jobs.

on Oahu, the Safe Travels program is working! Businesses are reopening. Jobs are returning. Vaccination rates are increasing. Covid rates are down. Why should each Hawaii county have different rules? Kauai set up a tier system for closing down last October and then abruptly shut down without even putting the system into place! The entire state of Hawai should have the same rules and Safe Travels is working. It should be established for all the islands as originally intended!

HB-1286

Submitted on: 2/7/2021 9:05:10 AM

Testimony for PDP on 2/9/2021 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Marceline Worster	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

As vacation property owners on Kauai of 8yrs, current tax payers and future residents, we appreciate the opportunity to leave our testimony. In regards to the Safe Travels program and Mayor Kawakami's exit of the program, it has been extremely confusing for travelers to navigate the ever changing rules that are usually announced far too late for people that have booked flights, reserved cars, booked TVR or Hotel stays, put deposits on excursions etc. We have had one reservation since March 2020 in the short window that Kauai re-opened in November. Our property is normally booked 85-90% of the year. We currently have had several guests wanting to rent our property, thinking they only need to test 3 days before and they cancel when we inform them that there is now a 'new' quarantine specific to Kauai. Most of these guests then choose to go to Maui to spend their vacation money. Many folks are fed-up with the islands completely and are finding other tropical options-which there are plenty. I believe there can be a balance of safety and re-opening Kauai. There will never be a 100% safe solution but the Safe Travels program was, and is, a step in the right direction. The islands need to be cohesive in their approach to travel so that visitors and residents can be assured that travel plans will not be cancelled, restaurants and hotels can re-employ and open, excursion operators can re-gain their livelihoods and citizens will not have to rely on food banks and government monies to get by. This island was once a thriving community and is now a depressed one. This is not how it has to be, Mayor Kawakami. Let your citizens regain their independence and their pride in themselves and in Kauai.

Mahalo, Marceline Worster

HB-1286

Submitted on: 2/7/2021 9:14:47 AM

Testimony for PDP on 2/9/2021 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Judie Hoepner	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

I am totally opposed to the "one size fits all" stance of this bill. So far, Kauai has managed to have far fewer covid cases than other islands mainly due to the conditions imposed by our mayor. I believe that each island should be allowed to do what is best for their residents.

HB-1286

Submitted on: 2/7/2021 9:20:10 AM

Testimony for PDP on 2/9/2021 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Carl J. Berg	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

The regulations for Kauai have been proven to be more effective than those for the other islands.

Leave the Counties to set their own regulations, not those by an impcompetent DOH.

HB-1286

Submitted on: 2/7/2021 9:24:56 AM

Testimony for PDP on 2/9/2021 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Stan Greenbaum	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

Mayor Kawakami has successfully protected the residents of Kauai from the spread of COVID19 by opting out of the State of Hawaii travel plan. Kauai must be permitted to follow its own path to protect its citizens. We only have 9 ICU beds at Wilcox. We are hopeful that with increasing vaccination, we will reach an acceptable level of immunity within the next 6 months, possibly less.

HB-1286

Submitted on: 2/7/2021 9:35:35 AM

Testimony for PDP on 2/9/2021 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Susan Stayton	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

Dear Representatives,

I am writing against HB 1286. I live on Kauai and am opposed to the State forcing our island residents to live with the poor decisions made by our governor. Our mayor has courageously removed us from the State COVID travel program and the result is that we have the lowest rate of infection in the state. This is proof that our program is working. Please do not force us to suffer the same consequences the rest of the islands are suffering.

Respectfully submitted,

Susan Stayton, Lawai, HI

HB-1286

Submitted on: 2/7/2021 9:47:51 AM

Testimony for PDP on 2/9/2021 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Tiffany Grande	Grande's Gems and Gallery	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha,

I am a small business owner on the Island of Kauai. Our family has owned and operated our business since 1982. We've survived 2 hurricanes and the economic crash of 2008. These set backs were tough to whether but we managed through creativity and frugality. The Covid crisis is different. If it we're not for unemployment we woldn't be able to stay on Kauai as there is no cash flow coming in from our business. In November we saw a glimmer of hope but as soon as the travel restrictions changed to the new rules our business died. Today I am writing to ask that you please vote yes on HB1286. Kauai's small businesses are hurting. Many have shut down for good and I fear that those of us who remain will shortly follow suit if the travel restrictions here are not in allignment with the other islands - by March.

Having to close our business was bad enough but finding ourselves in the position of having no other choice but to take a government loan (EIDL) that we have to pay back with interest was like a slap in the face. We didn't want a loan to burden us further. The money should have been a grant. Regardless, we won't be in business much longer and thus won't be able to pay back the loan or any other debt if our island doesn't see more visitors soon.

Please help the families who relay on our small business to make a living and hire others who count on us for their livelihood. We are entrepreneurs - tough and creative: we will find a way back to solid ground if you just give us a chance.

Mahalo,

Tiffany Grande

HB-1286

Submitted on: 2/7/2021 10:13:23 AM

Testimony for PDP on 2/9/2021 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Lorraine Newman	Individual	Comments	No

Comments:

Aloha,

As a resident of Kauai I am in strong opposition to this bill. I cannot say enough words about how grateful I have been to our mayor for taking exception to the COVID rules in place for the other Hawaiian islands from the beginning of this pandemic until now. I have noted Governor Ige's resistance at times, but ultimately he allowed Kauai's mayor to govern Kauai with the awareness that Kawakami knows what is best for Kauai. Our mayor is our elected official... elected with an overwhelming majority of the vote I might add.

I understand the desire to unify the Safe Travels program. It makes sense on paper and it makes it easier for visitors to navigate an already fraught process. However, every island is not the same, neither in terms of the capacity of our health care facilities nor the local cultural attitude towards protecting ourselves vs welcoming business.

We all want to open up, put people back to work, put students back in the classrooms, travel freely, etc. BUT, I am writing to tell you that it has been an incredible blessing to have spent the past year, on Kauai where our COVID numbers have been extremely low. I'm talking about being able to get my daily needs met with very little anxiety. This is no small thing given how the pandemic has upended our lives.

The numbers don't lie. The only time our positive cases spiked in any significant manner was when we were FORCED to open with the 3-day testing program in October. We are a popular visitor destination, especially with visitors from the West Coast, yet Kauai's current positive case numbers are extremely low. The only reason for this is the unique safety measures put in place by our mayor.

PLEASE continue to permit each island to design its own safe travels program. Our businesses will flourish once we are past this pandemic. Please allow us to feel safe until that time comes. Each mayor must be able to tailor a safe travels program that best serves the unique needs of each island and its people.

OPPOSE this bill.

Mahalo nui loa,

Lorraine Newman

HB-1286

Submitted on: 2/7/2021 10:14:43 AM

Testimony for PDP on 2/9/2021 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Denise Kaufman	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

I am writing to strongly oppose HB1286. Each of our islands has unique capabilities, resources and systems for handling the challenges of Covid-19. Here on Kauai, thanks to Mayor Kawakami and the protocols put in place in consultation with our Health Department, recommendations from the CDC and other local stakeholders, we have reversed the disturbing upward trajectory that started in October of 2020 with the "Safe Travels" program and have lowered our infection rate significantly. We have 9 ICU beds on our island. It would be unconscionable and unjust to have policies imposed on us that endanger our residents and our health care system. Let us continue to vaccinate our people and stay the course with our own policies until our elected officials and Health Department say we can move forward with wise next steps.

Mahalo for your kokua in considering my testimony.

Denise Kaufman

HB-1286

Submitted on: 2/7/2021 10:14:57 AM

Testimony for PDP on 2/9/2021 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Andrew Bushnell	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

We who live on Kaua`i have been blessed to have very few cases of covid-19 over the past few months. When we were under the state's Safe Travel plan we had many more cases. We are lucky to have a mayor who looks out for our health and who was able to protect us from greater incidence of the disease. Please note that Maui, which operates under the so-called "safe" travel plan has had many more cases of the disease and has had many more deaths. Please do not pass HB1286. Please leave control of travel to the various islands in the hands of the mayors of each island. Thank you, Andrew Bushnell

HB-1286

Submitted on: 2/7/2021 10:26:27 AM

Testimony for PDP on 2/9/2021 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Mark Walsh	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

Dear chairman,

I am a concerned citizen and a registered nurse. I am opposed to bill HB1286 as I fear it will lessen the effectiveness of Kauai's leadership to contain the current pandemic. As of Feb. 7, Kauai county is the only Hawaii county considered to be "On track for containment" according to covidactnow.org, which provides high level analyses of pandemic data. The current leadership has done an excellent job at keeping its population safe. Kauai currently has two active cases.

Kauai is unique in its population and needs. No county should be forced to adopt an approach that is less effective in protecting their population. HB1286 would prevent Kauai from continuing its current approach which could potentially put its local and visitor population at higher risk.

Instead the state should offer a comprehensive plan, but allow Kauai and other counties to implement further interventions or more robust approaches to protect their unique populations. As an RN, I have been taught to individualize care to my patients. We must follow the same principles and allow counties to individualize their approaches because local government leaders know their populations best.

Please do not strip Kauai's leaders of the ability to protect their unique population by passing HB1286.

Thank you for your consideration,
Mark Walsh



STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
P. O. Box 3378
Honolulu, HI 96801-3378
doh.testimony@doh.hawaii.gov

Testimony COMMENTING on H.B. 1286
RELATING TO TRAVEL

REP. LINDA ICHiyAMA, CHAIR
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON PANDEMIC & DISASTER PREPAREDNESS
REP. RICHARD H.K. ONISHI, CHAIR
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON LABOR & TOURISM

Hearing Date: 2/9/2021

Room Number: VIA VIDEO CONFERENCE

1 **Department Testimony:** Thank you for the opportunity to provide comment on House Bill
2 1286 which establishes COVID-19 testing requirements, exemptions to said requirements, and
3 coverage of associated costs of post-arrival mandatory self-quarantining for travelers. The
4 Department of Health respectfully offers amendments to this bill.

5 The Department of Health is able to provide technical and scientific guidance for exemptions
6 from testing requirements. However, the establishment of the conditions should be the purview
7 of the incident commander who would additionally incorporate other considerations, including
8 practicality and feasibility, when establishing the policies for exemptions.

9 Additionally, it is noted that the current language addresses responsibility for mandatory self-
10 quarantine costs for travelers who receive positive test results, but does not address who is
11 responsible for quarantine costs for travelers without positive test results but who have not
12 received and uploaded negative test results upon arrival.

13 The question of how mandatory quarantine will be implemented and enforced and with what
14 resources long term is unclear. The Department recommends the bill specify that the Safe
15 Travels program, administered by the incident commander, will implement and manage
16 implementation of travel-related quarantine.

1 Approval of entities that provide COVID-19 testing for the purposes of travel screening is
2 currently and should continue to be implemented by the Safe Travels program. The Department
3 of Health provides technical guidance on reliability of various test types and criteria for
4 identifying whether a test or laboratory meets certain Emergency Use Authorization or clinical
5 certification standards. However, other considerations, including practicality and feasibility of
6 test validation within the context of Safe Travels program implementation, must be weighed
7 when establishing criteria for approved testing entities. These criteria should be established by
8 the incident commander, who has oversight of the Safe Travels program.

9 Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.

10

11 **Offered Amendments:** The Department of Health recommends that the language be changed
12 from “The Department of Health shall establish conditions under which persons may be deemed
13 automatically exempt,” to “The Incident Commander shall establish conditions under which
14 persons may be deemed automatically exempt, taking into consideration recommendations
15 provided by the Department of Health.”

16 Additionally, the clause “Any person who receives a positive test result post-arrival shall be
17 responsible for securing and paying all costs associated with that person’s mandatory self-
18 quarantine and isolation...” be changed to “Any person who does not obtain a negative test result
19 prior to arrival shall be responsible for...”

20 “...‘state approved-COVID-19 test’ means a test to determine the presence of active COVID-19
21 infection that is administered through an entity approved by the department of health” should be
22 changed to “...approved by the Safe Travels program.”

HB-1286

Submitted on: 2/7/2021 10:29:48 AM

Testimony for PDP on 2/9/2021 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
anne barber	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

Aloha from Maui!

i oppose this bill. Maui is not Oahu, we cannot be treated like Oahu. When the legislature on Oahu will show us that you care about the outer islands, then we can talk but not before.

None of you care about what is happening on Maui. I have been vocal for months now, you only stonewall us, we are not heard. So please, pass a Bill for Oahu but leave the outer islands alone. We have currently more visitors than Oahu and our 7 day average is double than Oahu and no one cares about the virus spread on Maui due to travelers (visitors and returning residents).

your time would be better spent closing the loophole allowing 25% to 30% of all travelers landing in hawaii with no negative pcr test. That should be your number one priority to make sure that all travelers are tested. Work on that first, it will help all of us.

mahalo,

anne

HB-1286

Submitted on: 2/7/2021 10:31:20 AM

Testimony for PDP on 2/9/2021 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Ruta Jordans	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

Mayor Kawakami of Kauai courageously opted out of the state's plan as of December 1, 2020, because the coronavirus cases on Kaua'i started spiking dramatically after the 1-test plan went into effect. Because it opted out, Kaua'i has had the lowest incidence of COVID cases in the state, which is showing that Kaua'i's approach is safer. Each island's situation is different. One size does not fit all. Please oppose this bill for the safety of all our citizens!

HB-1286

Submitted on: 2/7/2021 10:47:53 AM

Testimony for PDP on 2/9/2021 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Kimberli Blackburn	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

Good day,

I live on Kauai and I strongly oppose HB1286 because it would remove the power and ability of each County to set their own levels of protections for their residents against Covid-19. The Governor already reviews each of the Mayor's proposals and decides to approve them or not. There is absolutely NO REASON to legislate this change. I've spoken to many tourists here that have gone through the 10 day quarantine, others that have recently taken advantage of Kauai's bubble program, and many who have recently moved here as covid-refugees from other states. One of the reasons they are coming here and are willing to do the quarantine is because this island has protections in place that are above and beyond those in place by others. Look at the numbers on Oahu! And you want all the islands to follow Oahu's lead? Kauai entered the Safe Travels program briefly and within a short time we had more cases under the Safe Travels provisions that we'd had since the beginning of Covid so we're out because the Safe Travels program isn't safe enough. I've heard that this bill was proposed by people who are saying that Kauai's more protective measures are hurting the tourism of other islands. How can this be? If people don't want to quarantine they can go to Oahu with only a negative test.

I urge you to please vote NO on HB1286. Leave the power to make these decisions in the hands of the island Mayor's, with approval of the Governor.

HB-1286

Submitted on: 2/7/2021 11:15:26 AM

Testimony for PDP on 2/9/2021 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Valerie Weiss	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

Please vote no on HB 1286.

It is well known that COVID-19 takes time to develop enough to show on tests. Since that is true, the state should not require that each country accept travelers without quarantine, based on a single pre-arrival COVID test.

Additionally we now are aware of C-19 variants that are becoming prevalent and which contain a more robust and possibly a more deadly virus, making for easier transmission.

HB 1286 will not be healthy for Hawaii.

HB-1286

Submitted on: 2/7/2021 11:20:51 AM

Testimony for PDP on 2/9/2021 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Joe P. Moss	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

Aloha, I am strongly opposed to HB1286. We are doing fine on Kauai. Please do not take away our ability to govern ourselves and keep our island safe. An economy can be revived. A dead person cannot. We are a small part of the state's revenues so it won't help the State that much. This bill is an attempt to take away our islands freedom to choose how we deal with a once in a lifetime pandemic. It feels like it is an attempt to punish Kauai for it's success so the other islands with their much worse COVID numbers will look better. Joe Moss

HB-1286

Submitted on: 2/7/2021 11:43:43 AM

Testimony for PDP on 2/9/2021 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Maria Maitino	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

To Members of the Legislature,

I vehemently oppose HB 1286. I am from Kauai. Our Mayor Derek Kawakami, along with the Kauai County Health Department decided after much consideration, to opt out of the current Safe Travels Program. Why? It has been proven that a single test will miss 30% to 40% of those who are infected and traveling. A single test does not pick up anyone in the early stages of the disease or people who may have caught it during their travels.

The (not so) Safe Travels Program also ignores the CDC's travel recommendations, which includes a pre-test, a seven-day self quarantine, and a second test 3 to 5 days after arrival.

If you consider the following results of Mayor Kawakami's thoughtful decision to opt out of the (not so) Safe Travels Program, and instead institute the bubble resort concept, it is clear that he made the right decision.

- In 2020 our hotel occupancy was almost equal to the other counties. Maui and Kaua'i were both at about 33%. Most impressive, though, is that, from Jan. 17 to 23, 2021, Kaua'i's occupancy rate was at 19.7%, Maui at 20.1% and O'ahu at 21.7%. There is also a steady increase in tourists using the bubbles for the first few days of their trips, with more hotels and flights planned;

- Kaua'i's vaccination program has been one of the most-efficient and rapidly-moving programs in the country, partially due to our very-low case count and the ability to put our resources into vaccinations rather than illnesses;

- We remain one of the safest counties in the country. Our local businesses and residents enjoy the freedom of the least-restrictive tier 4, while O'ahu has climbed to tier 2 restrictions.

Some businesses on Kaua'i think that the opting out is causing their hardship, but Hawai'i economist, Paul Brewbaker, has argued that it is not the COVID restrictions imposed by government that are hurting the economy, but the prevalence of the virus that keeps people from participating in the marketplace. By allowing the virus to

continue to spread in the other counties in Hawai'i, the 1-test plan is delaying economic recovery.

Although the vaccine rollout has begun, it is important that Kauai continue to follow what has been a very successful opt out decision. Kaua'i was in the Safe Travels program for about seven weeks. During that time, we doubled the number of cases we had in the entire previous seven months. Virtually all the new cases were travel-related. Kaua'i opted out of the Safe Travels program and our numbers rapidly returned to less than one new case per day. Maui remained in the program, and went from having about 1% of the cases in the state to having about 18% of the state's total number. They began to see 15 to 30 new cases per day, and the Big Island was not far behind.

This is not the time to switch gears. The UK variant, which increase transmissibility, has now been found in Hawaii. Do not force the mayor to ignore the CDC recommendations. Once the vaccine has had time to significantly reduce the number of nationwide cases and herd immunity is in effect, only then may instituting the Safe Travels Program for Kauai be a good idea.

Thank you,

Maria Maitino

I am both shocked and outraged that the Hawaii State Legislature is following in the footsteps of various governors in mainland states to prevent local jurisdictions from implementing sound, science-based measures to protect public health.

The fact of the matter is that the State's Safe Travels program is not founded on sound medical and scientific principles. To this point, the CDC posted a pre-print version of a research paper on the topic of "Reducing travel-related SARS-CoV-2 transmission with layered mitigation measures: Symptom monitoring, quarantine, and testing" on November 23, 2020. One of the conclusions of this paper was that the pre-testing methodology employed by the Safe Travels program is largely ineffective at reducing COVID transmission risk. The contents of this paper entitled were covered in mainstream national news media at the time.

The CDC paper is available here:

<https://www.medrxiv.org/content/10.1101/2020.11.23.20237412v1>

Using current understanding of COVID epidemiology and mathematical modeling, the CDC research team concluded that testing 3 days prior to travel resulted reduced COVID transmission risk by only 5%-9%. If that article written by a team of 8 researchers from the CDC is not convincing enough, then compare the empirical evidence of the COVID trajectories of both Maui and Kauai to serve to validate the underlying science and mathematics in the CDC research paper.

That leadership in Hawaii's House of Representatives has introduced a bill specifically to wrest power from the County of Kauai, which has been making public health decisions which are both science-based and appropriate for Kauai's medical infrastructure, is outrageous. That the motivation for doing so is political and financial is completely unconscionable. That HR Bill 1286 is even being discussed is a sad day for Hawaii and its people.

Decisions about public health should be left in the hands of local public health authorities, not state politicians. And the decisions made by those authorities should be based on medicine and science, not wishful thinking and fantasy.

HB-1286

Submitted on: 2/7/2021 11:51:12 AM

Testimony for PDP on 2/9/2021 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Terri R. Hanson	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

As a Kauai citizen I am appalled that a bill like this has even been introduced. It would be extremely negligent to expose Kauai to more virus, especially the variants now seen, without FULLY addressing our medical capacity.

Kauai's bubble program is working. We have done the best job in the state, if not the nation, even the world, at containing the corona virus spread. Don't jeopardize our health and our hard work and sacrifice without a proper intake system, especially a system that is NOT in accord with CDC guidelines, as I feel the so-called Safe Travels program doesn't conform to what the CDC recommends. Don't force the mayors to ignore the CDC recommendations. A single test is not adequate, period.

Without the health of the citizens of this island, we will have no work force to cater to incoming guests. Stop this insanity in its tracks now. If this bill is passed and even one Kauai citizen dies as a result of a traveler incoming to the island without proper protocols as CDC recommends, be it citizen or visitor, make no mistake about it, the blood will be on each and every hand of those who supports and/or votes in favor of this bill.

Leave the fate of the island of Kauai in the hands of our very steadfast and honorable mayor and health director and their support system. They have shown HOW this can work. Follow their example, instead of forcing your "unsafe travels" program upon us.

I beg and plead with you all to use some common sense. If our system wasn't working, fine, change it. But it is working. Don't change something that is working and that is keeping our citizens healthy and free. We remain one of the safest counties in the country. Our local businesses and residents enjoy freedom of the least-restrictive tier 4, while Oahu has climbed to tier 2 restrictions. Don't take this away from us. We worked for it, we earned it, we sacrificed for it.

HB-1286

Submitted on: 2/7/2021 11:59:54 AM

Testimony for PDP on 2/9/2021 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Gianluca Fogaroli	Cleaning company	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha,

I've been a cleaning company owner for vacation rentals here on Kauai since March 2009.

I am totally supportive of bill HB1286.

Since Covid started not having the State making decisions for ALL the counties has been a disaster for Kauai and tourism.

It created a lot of confusion and made it impossible for me and many others to go back to work.

I also find very unfair that some counties like Oahu and Maui can continue working but Kauai cannot because of our mayor.

He has become way too power in such important matter.

Many tourists just in the past several weeks canceled their vacation on Kauai and instead went to Maui and Oahu.

It doesn't make any sense, we should ALL be allowed to work and have the same rules.

Regards,

Gianluca Fogaroli

HB-1286

Submitted on: 2/7/2021 4:23:36 PM

Testimony for PDP on 2/9/2021 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Jacquelyn McChesney	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

As a 71 yr old woman, too young for vaccine protection, I must protest subjecting Kauai to your statewide, tourist money over lives reasoning. Our Mayor has used science not financial charts to keep us alive.

Saving your business, even your home over saving many lives is a no brainer. Please allow Kauai our ability to set our own life saving rules. Do not pass HB1286. Thank you.

HB-1286

Submitted on: 2/7/2021 12:02:50 PM

Testimony for PDP on 2/9/2021 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Sandra Magnussen	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

I would like to acknowledge the great job Mayor Kawakami has done for our island and community. HB 1286 definitely has not integrated Science into it's plan, something our leading international, national and local leading Immunologist have commented on time and time again. To get ahead of the virus we must get our cases down and vaccinate and to do this is to heed how other successful countries, such as New Zealand, Australia and others have done it. We need to put the community at the forefront of any decisions if we are ever to have a thriving economy, again. Without our island communities "health" where will Hawaii's tourism be and where do you intend on getting new workers? We all know the health-risks of the contracting COVID-19 and the long lasting effects of the "long-haulers."

Why, when now there has been mutations around the world and detected here in Hawaii are you wanting to decrease travel restrictions? That seems oxymoronic to do and playing into the tourism/business industry before the community. How does one say we will get the numbers down to protects our citizens and yet open up to a "more effective spreading COVID mutation virus" at the same time? You just cannot - this is definitely a time to consider Science based data to drive our decisions.

One Size does not fit all islands and Mayor Kawakami realizes that and has demonstrated this by his actions. Kauai is unlike Oahu, Maui and the Big Island in our capacity for health care beds/ICU beds, in qualified physicians and equipment for Critical Care COVID patients, etc., a reason why many Kauaians fly to Oahu for certain medical care. These are issues that is based in Science and public health data.

What if we, your constituents, said: *"As our legislators you will be in an all-size fits House Bill XXXX stating that you could only get health care from entity XYZ."* Would you pass the bill? To have 'empathy' for all and not just who makes the most noise. I'd like to end with Kauai's unique needs to be considered and I am definitely NOT for HB1286.

HB-1286

Submitted on: 2/7/2021 12:22:03 PM

Testimony for PDP on 2/9/2021 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Cecelia Horkin	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

I am a 67 year old resident living on a fixed income in Kauai. I do NOT support HB1286. Early in the epidemic, our island community survived many months with no increase in cases thanks to Mayor Kawakami's excellent judgment and policies. The moment he was forced to accept travelers with only pre-travel testing, we went from no new cases for months to new cases almost every day, all related to travel. Our numbers began to sky rocket. The virus began to spread. We have very little space in our hospitals for cases and cannot afford to overwhelm our small health system. Even now with post-travel testing, the newspaper is now reporting about 1 new case per day. We seem to be containing this fairly well because we are catching these cases before the disease spreads with a 3 day quarantine before post-travel testing. Nearly all these cases are travel related and most are local people returning. I am proud of Mayor Kawami. I have faith in his thoughtful, caring, scientific, and *courageous* approach. Please to not upset a system what is working for Kauai for the perceived economic benefit of the state as a whole.

1. the way, I am a legal vacation rental owner. My AOA fees, property taxes, and insurance expenses on my rental property are approximately \$3000 per month. Other than the vacation rental which is earning virtually nothing, I have no other income other than social security. This is taking a huge chunk out of my retirement. I have my COVID problems like everyone else. I need surgery on my back and can't leave to get it. There are no spine surgeons on Kauai. I haven't seen my kids or my 5 year old grandson for almost 2 years. There is no financial help for those of us who are landlords or vacation rental owners. I just want you to know that ***even despite this, I think HB1286 is a terrible idea.***

Cecelia Horkin

HB-1286

Submitted on: 2/7/2021 12:36:31 PM

Testimony for PDP on 2/9/2021 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Gayle Kathryn Hughes	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Having just read an argument against this bill, I felt compelled to comment, I am a resident of Kauai and it is time to open up. The argument that in October cases went way up because of mainland travelers is valid, but that was four months ago. If not now, when? The vaccine is being distributed and so many of the most vulnerable are now very unlikely to become ill. The young and strong don't get all that sick and so what if they do? Life is full of obstacles and it's usually one you don't prepare for that gets you in the end. The whole point of all the rules we've been living under was to flatten the curve and not overwhelm our limited health facilities. Now it's become an attempt to stop anyone at all from becoming ill. What have we had, one Covid death on Kauai? How many Covid RULES related deaths or beatings have occurred? How many people are struggling to just get enough to eat? We all know the downside of being antisocial, especially for our young people. New numbers have come out claiming that the actual fatality rate of Covid 19 is no worse than the flu. Since when do we live in fear of the flu? I believe that fear has taken over common sense and it is high time that we at least begin to follow a path of getting back to as normal as possible. I fear that NOT happening is far worse and has further reaching terrible consequences than what we're currently experiencing. Thank you for listening. Gayle Hughes, Kalaheo, Hawaii

HB-1286

Submitted on: 2/7/2021 1:10:45 PM

Testimony for PDP on 2/9/2021 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Kathryn Jones	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Thank you for the opportunity to speak. As a recent vacation owner on the island of Kauai, I have been amazed by the lack of direction and ping-pong politics regarding participating in the safe travels program. This confusion has caused total uncertainty in both travelers and businesses in making or keeping any travel plans to the island of Kauai and having businesses open and operating. Travelers cannot possibly be expected to make plans and spend monies to visit when the rules and requirements are ever changing. Of the bookings I had in 2020, all but one cancelled leaving my residence vacant for most of the year. The one that came was during that short window when Kauai was part of the Safe Travels program. No other traveler from my bookings was willing to navigate either the complex and more costly option of staying in a bubble quarantine (even when I offered to cover part of the cost) or juggling the timing of testing, traveling to another island first, testing again and then trying to be granted entry on Kauai. They either canceled coming to Hawaii entirely or went to one of the other islands still participating in the Safe Travels program. For the week ending on January 20, 2021 Kauai had a dismal average of 19 travelers/day, for a total of 134 for the week according to the state HTA's passenger arrival data. For good or ill, Hawaii is hugely dependent on tourism dollars. Allowing Kauai to opt out has only shifted and increased Kauai's financial burden to the other islands and the federal government to meet Kauai's fiscal needs which is unfair. It is discriminatory that I, as a TVR, am required to continue paying my already high property taxes but I am banned from making any income to pay that tax because I am not a bubble resort. Business after business on Kauai has closed their doors – some permanently after years of investment and generations of ownership because there are no tourism dollars to support them. What a blow to these owners to lose everything they have worked a lifetime to build and, in some cases, generations to build such as the Ono Family Restaurant in Kappa that has closed its doors forever after 40 years. As the owner of that restaurant, Kenny Ishii said in the Honolulu Civil Beat on Decemeber 15th, 2020 "You can't just turn off travel. We can't survive without it." As each business fails, more locals are displaced, lose health insurance and turn to the county coffers and, in the case of Kauai being the most travel restrictive island, becoming a welfare state that looks to the others islands and fed money to bail them out. Homelessness has swelled to record numbers at Anini Beach, Lydgate Park and elsewhere. Locals are now reliant on food stamps, restaurant cards and unemployment checks. Kauai life and tourist appeal has been, and continues to be, decimated by Kawakami, his policies and his ability to 'opt-out'. One state – one rule. Thank you for your time.

Re: Testimony regarding HB 1286 (Against)

Statewide Safe Travels Program

Aloha Honorable Representatives:

I am writing from the island of Maui against this proposed bill.

This bill would strip mayors of their ability to protect their counties. Here are the reasons why I am against it:

1. All of the Hawaiian Islands are not in the same situation and therefore should not be treated the same. We have different resources—some islands do not have hospitals, while Maui has one. The one hospital that we do have has been of major concern to residents, as it has been the cause of several clusters here and has been completely full at times.
2. Maui has suffered terribly since mid-October, with cases rising steadily. Our dramatically rising numbers were ignored because the overall state numbers did not increase and news is very much Honolulu-centric. Our Mayor made a promise when he agreed not to opt out of the Safe Travels Plan that he would reinstate quarantine once cases rose to 4.99 per 100,000 (so 7.5 for Maui island). Once the numbers increased past that, he said that he had decided not to use the tier system (in other words, he reneged on his promise to his constituents). The target for re-instating quarantine kept moving as we reached higher numbers, and now he says that he won't do much unless the one hospital we have is overrun. At least we have that option. In this plan, even if the hospital is overrun, there would be no option of opting out of the Safe Travels Plan. Note that KITV reported on 2/1/21 that the hospital was indeed full, although I think that is no longer the case.
3. Mayor Kawakami has been the best leader by far in the way he has handled this situation. He is the best advocate who cares about the residents of his island. He is my hero, and the majority of Maui residents wish that he was our mayor. This bill would strip him of his ability to protect Maui, and is probably targeted specifically at him.
4. The bill calls to allow people to arrive here first and then test. This strategy was tried on all islands and failed. Maui had trailers to care for these people and contracted with a resort hotel here to take these people in. The bill calls for people to be responsible for their own quarantine costs, but that's not the way it works. When the visitor has a reservation at an Air B&B, they cannot go there if they test positive, so we become responsible to handle their lodging. Hotels will often not accept people they know are positive, and we become responsible for their lodging. The point of bringing visitors in for the profit is completely dashed, as now we are responsible to pay for their expenses.
5. A fifth reason that I oppose this measure is that not all the islands are being treated the same as far as vaccines. State leadership apparently decided on an 11% allotment for Maui, which did not cover our needs in any way, probably due to the high number of part-time residents, or snowbirds, we have. There were other issues such as the use of VAMS where tourists could and did sign up for the vaccine here. The online request system was very difficult and many seniors

were not able to manage it, however for others it was very easy to lie and many who got the vaccine should not have been eligible. The state is planning to finish tier 1b by the end of February, and we have no idea whether we will be back open for vaccines by then. What we do know is that we will be nowhere close to finishing up 1b along with the rest of the state. In other words, Maui will be even less protected than the rest of the state.

6. LG Green is proposing to waive tests for travelers who are vaccinated, believing that the vaccine causes sterilization immunity. The research is still being done on this, and opening up based on unproven research is not a good idea and endangers us unnecessarily.
7. Lastly, Maui's tourism numbers are much higher per capita. We have about 11% of the population but at least 36% of the tourists. Making decisions about travelers affects Maui much more than O'ahu, which we have seen with the Safe Travel Plan since mid-October.

Please vote against this bill. Think about the impact on the neighbor islands, which are part of the state. One size does not fit all!

To: The Honorable Linda Ichiyama, Chair
The Honorable Stacelynn K.M. Eli, Vice Chair,
The Honorable Richard H.K. Onishi, Chair and
The honorable Jackson D. Sayama, Vice Chair and
Members of the House Committee on Pandemic & Disaster Preparedness & Committee
on Labor and Tourism

Date: Tuesday, February 9, 2021

Time: 8:30 a.m

From: Kirsten Hermstad Williams, Owner Black Dog Gallery and Goods, & The Taro Patch
House

Re: Testimony in Opposition to HB 1286

I am writing today as a resident of Kaua'i, and the owner of two small businesses in Kilauea, Kaua'i, in opposition of HB 1286. Despite economic hardships due to COVID, I am grateful that our Mayor has had the flexibility to identify and act on the unique characteristics of our island and take the steps necessary to protect our community.

As a business owner, I am eager for visitors to return, but NOT at the expense of the health of my community. I believe that there is a smart way forward and quite frankly I am perplexed that state leadership has not used some of the great examples from around the world to develop an exceptional plan for Hawai'i.

I respectfully ask that you:

1. Recognize that each island has a unique set of circumstances and resources – allow the Mayor's to make decisions for the good of their local community. (Different rules for each island being confusing for visitors is NOT a good reason for a unified statewide plan)
2. Read and understand the science behind testing and clearly understand the reduction in risk with a two test protocol;
3. Refrain from making this topic about politics, listen to those with boots on the ground.
4. Listen, truly listen to the people, without the filter of re-election or special interests. We are beyond that now, this is life and death, it is time to put aside anything but that which is good and right and true for the people.
5. Take action and make rules that put residents first, rules that put them equal to or in a better position than the visitor.

The Mayors of each County know the needs of their community best. They are face-to-face with community members every day, they know the resources that are available and how best to allocate them. Decisions about the well-being of the residents of each island are best made by those with the most knowledge about those places.

The travel rules that exist today are full of holes that could so easily be addressed. Please use the science and examples of other successes and develop a stellar plan for Hawai'i. Imagine just a for a minute a great outcome for Hawai'i, let's join the ranks of the places that are doing a great job! That would make people want to visit!

Mahalo for your service,

Kirsten Hermstad Williams

HB-1286

Submitted on: 2/7/2021 1:45:21 PM

Testimony for PDP on 2/9/2021 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Lucy Miller	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

Kauai county must be permitted to be exempted from the state travel law, which was shown to unreasonably increase our Covid-19 spread and thus delay our county's economic recovery. We are all behind Mayor Kawakami's rules to protect our community requiring exemption from Governor Ige's "safe travel" plan.

HB-1286

Submitted on: 2/7/2021 1:47:39 PM

Testimony for PDP on 2/9/2021 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Megan Fox	Malama Kaua'i™	Oppose	No

Comments:

This proposal is an unfair attack on our island's ability to govern itself. Kaua'i has been more successful in preventing COVID spread than other islands BECAUSE we have been able to do what works for us and in the best intention of our residents. To strip the power from our leadership in times like this is unconscionable. Every island should be able to do what it believes is in the best interests of its people.

To whom it may concern:

I am a 20 year Kauai resident who owns a home in Wailua. I am outraged at the proposed bill HB 1286 by Senator Saiki.

I have been furloughed from both my jobs since March 2020. I have struggled with unemployment and continue to do so. However, I am very much against opening up our Garden Island to visitors without the measures we currently have in place.

As you know Kauai has continued to be one of the safest counties in the country. We have all worked very hard to keep our kupuna safe. A big mahalo to Mayor Kawakami for keeping us all safe and putting the safety of our community first!

We are now working hard to get everyone vaccinated. We must be patient in allowing visitors to our island with only minimal restrictions. We must continue the fight and not let our guard down especially since we now know there is an even stronger strain that has arrived on Hawaii.

I beg you to let our Mayor Kawakami to continue to lead our small island with the measures he has in place. We are not ready nor equipped at our small hospital for anything more.

Sincerely,

Gina Lee
808-639-3349
P.O. Box 240
Kapaa, HI 96746

HB-1286

Submitted on: 2/7/2021 2:13:19 PM

Testimony for PDP on 2/9/2021 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Erik Horsley	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

I believe mayor Kawakami has done an excellent job of protecting Kauai because of his ability to tailor Kauai's response to covid. I believe a one size fits all policy will harm the citizens of Kauai. I believe this bill to be dangerous for me and my family on Kauai.

HB-1286

Submitted on: 2/7/2021 2:18:32 PM

Testimony for PDP on 2/9/2021 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
kasey buick	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha and thank you for the opportunity!

I'm a small business owner and my husband works in the hotel industry , we both directly rely on tourism for our incomes and livelyhoods. My husband has been offically laid off and my small business is failing because of the lack of direction our island has taken in the safe travels program.

Day after day we see no progress or communication from our mayor in opting back into the program, so we wholeheartedly support the decision to all be on the same page. One state one rule.

Mahalo.

HB-1286

Submitted on: 2/7/2021 2:28:49 PM

Testimony for PDP on 2/9/2021 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
dianna soong	businessHula Moon Gifts of Hanalei owner	Support	No

Comments:

Please pass this bill. Are island is dying from the restrictions in place by mayor of Kauai! Everyday more & more businesses are closing for good due to no visitors. Kauai has been a tourist island for many years & not many other ways to make a living. Please research mayor's bubble it is not helping are economy at all. Kauai needs to rejoin safe travel program now. . Please pass HB 1286. One person should not be able to make important decisions like this. We are one state , rules should be the same for all islands.

HB-1286

Submitted on: 2/7/2021 2:29:27 PM

Testimony for PDP on 2/9/2021 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Tamara Buck-Peterson	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I am saddened that so many of our favorite businesses on Kauai, where I am a home owner, are unable to survive because of the current restrictions being placed on the island. I understand the need for safety regarding the health of those who live on the island full time. I understand aggressive action towards those who break quarantine, refuse to properly wear their mask, etc. what I do not understand is that Kauai will not participate in the safe travels program with which the other islands have been a part. Let's use safety measures, while still allowing the island to prosper! There can be a happy medium between these two things. I would ask that you look closely at this measure, which will allow for both safety and prosperity! Thank you!
Tamara Buck Peterson

HB-1286

Submitted on: 2/7/2021 3:09:46 PM

Testimony for PDP on 2/9/2021 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Nicole Miller	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

To Whom it May Concern:

I oppose HB1286. Kauai has very few ICU beds, and simply can not handle a Covid surge. Mayor Kawakami was wise to opt out of the Safe Travels program. Maui has comparatively had much higher numbers. Forcing the islands to follow a state-wide mandate doesn't take into account how limited health care facilities are on some of the islands. I understand traveling to the state is confusing for visitors. However, I really don't understand why anyone would want to take a vacation during a pandemic, and now isn't the time to cater to tourists. Please do not pass HB1286! The local governments should have the right to address each of the islands unique needs most effectively.

Thank you,

Nicole Miller

HB-1286

Submitted on: 2/7/2021 3:11:51 PM

Testimony for PDP on 2/9/2021 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Molla ruth Braunstein	Individual	Comments	No

Comments:

Thank you for the opportunity to share my opinion. As a vacation owner on the island of Kauai, I have been devastated financially by the changing rules, that Kauai has the option of not participating in the safe travels program. I spent the last year unsuccessfully trying to reschedule guests and had to refund just about every guest. My husband has MS and had to quit working at his business last year due to his poor health. We thought we could get by because we had income from the vacation rental. It has been a difficult year for us financially and for all the people we hire to manage the condo. It has caused confusion in travelers. Many are expressing that they are done with coming to Hawaii. Travelers cannot possibly be expected to make plans and spend monies to visit when the rules and requirements are in constant flux. My condo has been vacant for almost the entire year. The ones that came were during that short window when Kauai was part of the Safe Travels program. None of my potential guests are willing to stay in a bubble resort which is more expensive. When I suggested staying on a different island, no one could find a place to get tested for covid that has a 3 day turnaround time for test results. My guests have either canceled coming to Hawaii entirely or went to one of the other islands still participating in the Safe Travels program. They have expressed bitter feelings of being unwanted by the people of Kauai. Hawaii is dependent on tourism dollars. Most people visiting this beautiful island just want to be out in nature to regroup from city life otherwise they would choose a place with a big nightlife. As a TVR, am required to continue paying my already high property taxes but I am banned from making any income to pay that tax rate because I am not a bubble resort. Business after business on Kauai has closed permanently. As each business fails, more locals are displaced and have to turn to the county for financial support. I do believe that most guests are respectful and will follow the rules. Kauai is a place of awe and one cannot help but feel that in one's soul. Please allow us to open up and be part of the safe travels program.

Molla B

HB-1286

Submitted on: 2/7/2021 3:13:13 PM

Testimony for PDP on 2/9/2021 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
John Patt	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

Aloha Representatives, My wife and I are both in our mid 70's, and depend heavily on our vacation rentals for our income. The loss of revenue due to COVID-related cancellations has weighed heavily on us.

But we survived Iniki, we survived 911, we survived the 2008 housing crash. And we will survive COVID, hopefully. Hopefully because you will have the intelligence and aloha to reject HB1286, a measure which will strip us of one of our major defenses against this insidious and diablolocal enemy. The single test proposal of HB1286 only opens up our family and friends to further assault from COVID. With the emergence of new COVID variants, HB1286, is not just impractical, it is unconscionable. We ask of you, only the chance to fight this enemy, the chance to survive COVID, and to rebuild our lives and our small rental business. Please give us that chance. Vote down HB1286.

HB-1286

Submitted on: 2/7/2021 3:27:58 PM

Testimony for PDP on 2/9/2021 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
John J Gosch	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Covid will be with us for years to come. Let's immediately get HI on a uniform policy regarding travel. Due to the Kauai mayor's confusing and non-scientific based decision, the island of Kauai is a welfare state. Business owners such as my wife and I are livid, as the mayor has no transparency with his agenda, and bamboozles islanders daily with misleading data to further instill fear and isolation.

John Gosch

HB-1286

Submitted on: 2/7/2021 3:51:05 PM

Testimony for PDP on 2/9/2021 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Lenda Helser	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

I oppose hb1286 because I want to malintain Kauai's status as the best county in the state and probably in the nation for preventing the spread of Covid. I support Mayor Kawakami's current plans.

HB-1286

Submitted on: 2/7/2021 4:07:45 PM

Testimony for PDP on 2/9/2021 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
JOAN BETTENCOURT	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I would like to see one state one rule. I am in full support of HB1286 as a property owner and business investor in Hawaii. The confusion brought on by Kauai's travel ban and bubble rules hurts ALL the counties. Jumping through hoops to come to Hawaii will force travelers to visit other destinations like Mexico and The Carribean for years to come. By having different rules for different islands we will continue to see confusion among travelers for the beautiful islands of Hawaii and they will stay away. We will not be able to gain the travelers trust ever again. The aloha brand is slowly going away. Its them vs us. Vaccines are a reality, contract tracing has improved, ICU beds are not being used for Covid patients to the degree everyone was so afraid of (and never were on Kauai), we have learned how to better manage sick patients and the positivity numbers are going down everywhere. We will never get rid of the virus but we can learn how to live with it and not become the virus ourselves.

The tax revenue lost from the travel industry will soon rear its ugly head in the reality of Hawaii residents and businesses. Some residents might not see or feel it yet and they feel safe and sound within their bubble because of the federal government bailouts, but we have to stop the bleeding now before this situation gets even worse. Save the island, save the children and bring them back to school, and bring back the lifeblood of the islands safely.

One state, one rule.

Joan Bettencourt

HB-1286

Submitted on: 2/7/2021 4:13:24 PM

Testimony for PDP on 2/9/2021 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Bill Skelton	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

I am a resident of Kauai and writing with concerns regarding the proposed standardized travel regulations for the state of Hawaii. I appreciate the desire to eliminate the confusion associated with the multiple regulations currently existing on the various islands, and likewise desire a return to tourist travel to help our small businesses.

That said, each of the neighbor islands is in a different position and has radically different capacity. My island of Kauai has only 9 ICU beds which could easily be overwhelmed if Covid cases should spike. Even if the number of beds could be surged to support more patients, it isn't clear where additional health care staff would come from.

In my opinion, the only way a state-wide regulation could work is if it is consistent with the needs of the most constrained neighbor island.

I would add that any state-wide regulation should be consistent with the most current advise and recommendations from the CDC. My understanding is that their current travel recommendation is a pretest, a quarantine, and a post-quarantine test. To the extent that a state-wide regulation does that, I would support it. Otherwise, I would be opposed.

Thank you for giving me a chance to express my opinion!

Bill Skelton

HB-1286

Submitted on: 2/7/2021 4:13:44 PM

Testimony for PDP on 2/9/2021 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Jill K. Reiner	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

We feel that for Kauai to open up that there needs to consistency within the state of Hawaii and that this bill creates that. Therefore we are in 100% support of this bill.

Owner of Kahala 723 Kauai

Jii K. Reiner

HB-1286

Submitted on: 2/7/2021 4:40:16 PM

Testimony for PDP on 2/9/2021 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Kristin Zimmerman	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

I am a 53 year old resident living on Kauai for the past 35 years. I do NOT support HB1286. Early in the epidemic, our island community survived many months with no increase in cases thanks to Mayor Kawakami's excellent judgment and policies. The moment he was forced to accept travelers with only pre-travel testing, we went from no new cases for months to new cases almost every day, all related to travel. Our numbers began to sky rocket. The virus began to spread. We have very little space in our hospitals for cases and cannot afford to overwhelm our small health system. Even now with post-travel testing, the newspaper is now reporting about 1 new case per day. We seem to be containing this fairly well because we are catching these cases before the disease spreads with a 3 day quarantine before post-travel testing. Nearly all these cases are travel related and most are local people returning. I am proud of Mayor Kawakami. I have faith in his thoughtful, caring, scientific, and courageous approach. Please to not upset a system that is working for Kauai for the perceived economic benefit of the state as a whole.

HB-1286

Submitted on: 2/7/2021 4:55:52 PM

Testimony for PDP on 2/9/2021 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Juliana Cherry	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I urge you to support HB 1286 which would welcome visitors to the state of Hawaii with a cohesive travel program. This will make the state of Hawaii a more attractive destination for travelers. Covid-19 pandemic procedures need to be consistent in all of the counties. I believe this protocol will keep our communities safe.

Kauai needs to be open to visitors without the current quarantine and double test requirements. All of us in Kauai that rely on the travel industry for our income, need to have the opportunity to receive visitors. I manage short term vacation rentals, and due to the current travel restrictions and the total uncertainty of when the mayor will open the island for travel, we have very few future bookings, and now people are cancelling summer reservations. Our business is interconnected with MANY services and businesses on the island.

We need to get back to work! The state needs the tax revenue.

Residents need to be able to have their family visit them from the mainland!

HB 1286 refines the Safe Travel Program and offers clarity in timing and the option for the DOH to add further measures. **Please support HB 1286.**

HB-1286

Submitted on: 2/7/2021 4:57:46 PM

Testimony for PDP on 2/9/2021 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Mark Wolfendale	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

Kauai has endured great economic hardship in order to keep our citizens safe from Covid-19. Now at this late stage, business interests from areas of the state with sophisticated and extensive medical facilities are demanding that Kauai give up the fight so they can present a uniform marketing message! The benefits of a uniform marketing message are based on OPINION and not fact. The state dictated a business friendly policy to Kauai once before and the case numbers doubled before the Mayor took corrective action to protect our citizens. That is a fact. Kauai has limited healthcare workers and healthcare facilities. That is also a fact.

To risk the health of Kauai residents based on OPINION while facts have clearly demonstrated significant danger is highly irresponsible. Your vote will create a life or death situation for an unknown number of Kauai citizens. Vote against HR1286 and protect your neighbors.

HB-1286

Submitted on: 2/7/2021 5:09:32 PM

Testimony for PDP on 2/9/2021 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
James Cherry	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I believe it is imperative to present a cohesive Covid-19 policy across all counties in the state of Hawaii. I live in Kauai and hear that many potential visitors to our island are avoiding the required quarantine and visiting the other islands instead due to our prohibitive restrictions. Our economy here is seriously damaged and will take years to recover. Please make it easier for Covid-free visitors to come and help our economic recovery.

HB-1286

Submitted on: 2/7/2021 5:19:46 PM

Testimony for PDP on 2/9/2021 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
David Patterson	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

The current travel restrictions are problematic because:

1. There is no clarity why different islands have different rules
2. There has never been a timeframe published so people know that the current rules are in effect until Day X, giving them the ability to know when to check back
3. Hawaii seems to be focused on picking testing partners that are located in California, completely ignoring the fact that people from other states have just as good of testing facilities as anywhere else
4. people have better odds in vegas of winning against the casino than they do in having confidence their test results will be available before departure
5. there is still confusion for the islands that do allow travelers with a negative test if those results are 72 hours before arrival or 72 hours before departure.

The financial impact this is having on my family is almost at a point where we will not be able to continue paying our mortgage. Safety is critical, just as clarity and consistency in travel rules.

Regards,

David & Vickie

HB-1286

Submitted on: 2/7/2021 5:58:48 PM

Testimony for PDP on 2/9/2021 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Randall Palmeira	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

I am in total opposition to House Bill 1286 designed to force all Hawaii counties to follow the State's one-test "Safe" Travels plan. This bill appears to make total sense with a consistent statewide plan for all islands. This could indeed be less confusing for travelers to the Hawaiian Islands. Unfortunately, it relies on the heavily flawed Hawaii Safe Travel plan. It clearly shows that local economic and political pressure to restart the Tourism Industry outweighs the health and safety of Hawaii's people.

The Hawaii Safe Travels program does not include the CDC's "international" travel recommendations requiring travelers to the United States, including U.S. citizens to have a negative COVID-19 test result or documentation of recovery from COVID-19 before boarding a flight to the Hawaiian Islands. It does not require a re-test 3-5 days after travel nor self-quarantine for 7 day after travel. Considering the United States leads the entire world in active Covid cases and death rates the CDC "international" travel recommendations should be "Safe" Travels minimum requirement for entry into the Hawaiian Islands from anywhere, including the continental United States.

We tried the State's Safe Travels one-test program and data shows it clearly failed on Kauai. Prior to its inception on October 15th 2020 Kauai's Covid infection rate was 60 infections, one month after opting-in to Safe Travels the Covid rate on Kauai doubled to 120 cases. That was double the number of cases Kauai experienced in the entire previous seven months prior to opting-in. Mayor Kawakami's courageous decision to opt-out of the Safe Travels program has kept Kauai's Covid infection rate to 178 confirmed (176 recovered) and one death as of February 7, 2021. Had Kauai followed the State's Safe Travels guidelines that doubled the rate of Covid infections every month, a projected 480 Kauaian's would have been infected.

The data shows Mayor Derek Kawakami's pro health policies work, Kauai has the lowest COVID incidence in Hawaii. Kauai is one of the safest Covid-19 pandemic exposed counties in the United States of America to be a resident or a visitor of. Kauai residents enjoy the freedom of living in the least-restrictive tier 4 level, while Oahu has climbed to tier 2 restrictions.

Kauai's Covid-19 travel policies are proven effective and supported by data. Safe Travels protocols and procedures need to be upgraded through-out Hawaii to Kauai's standard to enable healthy, safe travel to and from our State.

The most diabolical aspect of HB 1286 is it forces Hawaii's Mayors to disregard proven CDC recommendations in favor of less effective Safe Travel procedures. This destructive bill if enacted places Health and Safety of all in Hawaii at extreme risk.

Bottom line Hawaii's economy cannot recover until this virus is defeated. The Covid-19 virus cannot be defeated by enacting bad policies and decisions that give the virus the opportunity arrive and thrive.

Mahalo,
Randall G Palmeira

HB-1286

Submitted on: 2/7/2021 6:25:56 PM

Testimony for PDP on 2/9/2021 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Randy Atkins	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I am a property owner and long-time part-time resident of Kauai. The pandemic has clearly demonstrated where holes are in appropriate, timely, and consistent response across this nation and world. Hawaii is unique as an island state with it's limited health care options and capacity, thereby demanding more rapid response to ensure spread of infection. Hawaii may be a group of independant islands, but it is still one state goverened by one state level government.

Unfortunately during this past year it behaves as five different jurisdictions with different rules. The travel process is cumbersome and confusing to everyone. We hear all the time that travelers find it too difficult to understand the inconsistent and changing rules, so they decide to go somewhere else for vacation.

Kauai hides behind the claim there are only have 9 ICU beds, so our hands are tied, we must shut down travel to the island. Never does anyone in the Mayor's office say what they CAN do to create emergency capacity. There is no balance, the economy of Kauai is tanking, small businesses are shuttering for good. This situation must not continue. The message is that maintaining a safe envornment for residents AND allowing visitors are mutally exclusive. There is a responsible, safe means to literally save Kauai for the future. The SafeTravels pre-travel testing requirement needs to be mandated for everyone to eliminate the chaos. There MUST BE A CONSISTENT SET OF RULES FOR ALL ISLANDS. That's why I support HB1256.

Mahalo, Randy Atkins

HB-1286

Submitted on: 2/7/2021 6:36:23 PM

Testimony for PDP on 2/9/2021 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
candace mack	kauai calls realty	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha, Kauai Calls supports HB1286! We are a vacation rental company on Kauai and 100% of the guests say they can not afford to financially spend their average 7 day vacation locked up in quarantine at a resort bubble for 3 to 4 days then be tested at \$225 per test then move to one of our rentals. Kauai Mayor is crippling Kauai and negatively impacting all of the other islands.

We so appreciate the sponsors of this bill! You are the true Hawaiians!

Aloha!

Candace Mack



1050 Bishop St. PMB 235 | Honolulu, HI 96813
P: 808-533-1292 | e: info@hawaiiifood.com

Executive Officers

Joe Carter, Coca-Cola Bottling of Hawaii, *Chair*
Charlie Gustafson, Tamura Super Market, *Vice Chair*
Eddie Asato, The Pint Size Corp., *Secretary/Treas.*
Lauren Zirbel, HFIA, *Executive Director*
John Schlif, Rainbow Sales and Marketing, *Advisor*
Stan Brown, Acosta Sales & Marketing, *Advisor*
Paul Kosasa, ABC Stores, *Advisor*
Derek Kurisu, KTA Superstores, *Advisor*
Beau Oshiro, C&S Wholesale Grocers, *Advisor*
Toby Taniguchi, KTA Superstores, *Advisor*

TO:

Committee on Pandemic and Disaster Preparedness and Committee on Labor & Tourism
Rep. Linda Ichiyama and Rep. Richard H.K. Onishi, Chairs
Rep. Stacelynn K.M. Eli and Rep. Jackson D. Sayama, Vice Chairs

FROM: HAWAII FOOD INDUSTRY ASSOCIATION

Lauren Zirbel, Executive Director

DATE: February 9, 2021

TIME: 8:30am

PLACE: Via Videoconference

RE: HB1286 Relating to Travel

Position: Support

The Hawaii Food Industry Association is comprised of two hundred member companies representing retailers, suppliers, producers, and distributors of food and beverage related products in the State of Hawaii.

HFIA is in support of this measure. This is a common-sense way to safely allow visitors and returning Hawaii residents to avoid unnecessary self-quarantine. Allowing travelers who receive a negative COVID-19 test to be exempt from self-quarantine will ease travel confusion and make the process smoother and more efficient for everyone. Having clear manageable rules for testing and quarantine is an important step in safely opening up our economy.

Our local businesses and Hawaii residents have worked hard to keep our economy running and find ways to build a more diverse and resilient economy for the future. Right now, the most important step on the road to recovery and rebuilding is to find ways to safely welcome more visitors to our state. This measure can help make that happen. We thank you for the opportunity to testify.

HB-1286

Submitted on: 2/7/2021 6:48:43 PM

Testimony for PDP on 2/9/2021 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Mehana Vaughan	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

To Members of the Legislature,

I am writing in opposition to HB 1286. Each island is different, our needs, population, and available number of ICU beds and respirators. To keep our population safe, and our kupuna, each island needs the freedom to craft our own policies in the face of COVID-19.

Our Kaua'i Mayor Derek Kawakami, along with the Kauai County Health Department decided after much consideration, to opt out of the current Safe Travels Program because a single test will miss 30% to 40% of those who are infected and traveling including anyone in the early stages of the disease or people who may have caught it during their travels. We have had dozens of cases on our island of individuals who tested negative before their arrival, then positive upon coming to our island, even one within our own family. Had we all proceeded as if one test was adequate, all our family members on Kaua'i could have contracted Covid and proceeded to pass it through our island community. Though the post travel quarantine was not then mandatory, we selected to follow Kaua'i county recommendations, and thankfully kept our 'ohana and community safe. This personal experience helped us to see that even when everyone is being as careful as possible, the post travel quarantine is necessary to keep our island safe. It is a sound science based policy in keeping with the CDC's travel recommendations, which includes a pre-test, a seven-day self quarantine, and a second test 3 to 5 days after arrival. and requirements are needed to keep our island safe. The large number of cases on Maui, and declining then steady low numbers on Kaua'i, since the mayor opted out of the Safe Travels Program over the holidays shows the need for more protections than the Safe Travels Program provides. Our county governments are closest to their population and need to maintain the right to make their own policies and decisions, as the ever changing threat of covid-19 continues, and particularly with new variants showing up within our islands.

I also firmly believe that though it is a hardship for many island businesses, keeping COVID numbers low is critical, as economist Paul Brewbaker, has argued to restoring a healthy economy. He states that it is not restrictions imposed by government that are hurting the economy, but the prevalence of the virus that keeps people from participating in the marketplace and delays restoration of the economy. I have spoken to many local business owners who say they are seeing more local support and new

business, even in these hard times, as they learn to adapt, and tailor their offerings to the needs of residents. Many feel they are surviving with the level of business are low number of COVID cases affords, even with less tourists, but that going back to the reduced levels of business they have experienced under higher case counts, would be devastating.

Please vote to allow our county governments, to act in the best interests of their local populations, and do not subject our island of Kaua'i to inadequate safety regulations which would put our many beloved kāpuna and 'ohana at risk. With sincerest aloha,

Mehana Vaughan, Kilauea, Kaua'i

HB-1286

Submitted on: 2/7/2021 7:01:07 PM

Testimony for PDP on 2/9/2021 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
David Dinner	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

The individuality and differing needs of each island in Hawaii is evident. Representative Saiki's bill is inconsiderate, arrogant and fundamentally unfair. In addition, it is based on fiscal considerations and ignores the humanitarian protection of our citizens.

Additionally, it will exacerbate the Covid outbreak rather than reduce it by opening more areas to contamination and reducing control. Please vote no on this bill.

HB-1286

Submitted on: 2/7/2021 7:09:15 PM

Testimony for PDP on 2/9/2021 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Judith Shabert, MD, MPH	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

I am submitting this comment in opposition to HB1286 as a physician with a degree in Public Health living on Kauai. The legislature should be adopting measures to protect the citizens of Hawaii from this pandemic and following the guidelines developed by Mayor Kawakami and the Health Department here on Kauai. Kauai saw a doubling of Covid cases in the four weeks when our county was forced to adopt state regulations. Then our mayor chose to protect his constituents and instituted guidelines independent of the state to quarantine all visitors. This has resulted in a Covid case load of currently only 2 active cases resulting in perhaps one of two or three of the safest counties in the United States.

Many of the visitors to Kauai have proven to be Covid positive while in quarantine even though they were negative when boarding the plane to Hawaii. So what we are doing on Kauai is working! And we don't need external politicians to promote illness and death on our island.

Please be respectful to our mayor and responsible to the citizens of Kauai.

HB-1286

Submitted on: 2/7/2021 7:51:17 PM

Testimony for PDP on 2/9/2021 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Zoe Shinno	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

Aloha! Please add my name to list of individuals that do not support COVID Bill HB 1286.

Mayor Kawakami has stayed strong and protected Kauai which has the least number of COVID-19 active cases compared to Oahu, Maui county and Hawaii Island.

When the State can prove that its Safe Travel plan is equal to or more effective than Kauai's strategy then it may have a better chance of directing Kauai's future. But, until then, Kauai should not have to conform to the State's Safe Travel plan. A plan that has not been shown to be safe at all.

A traveler may test for the virus before departing for Hawaii and have not build up enough of the virus in his or her system to test positive. So, the traveler arrives in Hawaii and is carrying the virus but believes he or she is negative and Hawaii is not requiring the traveler to quarantine or take a second test.

In addition, many may believe that opening up travel will help the economy but has that idea really worked? In reality, most residents will not go out and support businesses if the virus is rampant. So, if Kauai is forced to open up travel, Kauai will now have more COVID-19 positive cases and businesses will eventually end up closing from lack of support due the public's fear of contacting the virus. Once that Pandora's Box is open Kauai cannot go back to the way life was previously. Kauai will then have more COVID-19 active cases and patients will use more of Kauai's limited healthcare resources and monetary resources that could be better spent on vaccinations and testing.

And, it is not like opening up travel will all of a sudden help everyone get back on their feet because most businesses cannot afford to have all employees return back to work and those employees that are returning may not be working full-time.

I support Mayor Kawakami's strategy for keeping Kauai safe and recovering Kauai's economy.

One active case is one too many because this virus multiples exponentially. Any one case is someone's family member, friend, love, co-worker and/or fellow islander.

Keep Kauai Strong!

Mahalo!

Zoe A. Shinno

HB-1286

Submitted on: 2/7/2021 8:01:26 PM

Testimony for PDP on 2/9/2021 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Lloyd Anderson	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

1. It is time that Hawaii acts as a State and pulls together.

We travel to Kauai quite often and have since 1975, as well as having lived on Kauai Island. We find the actions of the Mayor and his advisers on Kauai are not operating in the best interest of their people. Confusion is probably not the right word to describe how crazy it is to try and understand what one is suppose to do when they want to visit or return home to Kauai. is time for the Governor to step back in the picture and make the decisions that are best for the state of Hawaii.

Time to open up the island of Kauai and help our friends and business that are hurting. They should have the same rights as the people on all the islands. Families & Businesses are being hurt and lost.

If a problem develop, the Governor is smart enough to take care of it and would.

Are we going to open up Kauai now or are we going to keeping playing Mayor Kawakami's power game?

Thank You for you for reviewing my comments.

Respectfully,

Lloyd Anderson

HB-1286

Submitted on: 2/7/2021 8:07:50 PM

Testimony for PDP on 2/9/2021 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
gordon b peterson	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

State law and DOH rules should set a floor of protections and not a ceiling. If a County desires stronger health protections, they should be allowed to put them into place. To prevent Kauai, my home, and all other neighbor-island communities from setting COVID restrictions that make sense for our/their island should not be allowed. To deny the fact that each island may have different needs is ill-conceived. The single negative test may be what's good for Oahu, but it's not enough for Kauai. Our medical system will be overwhelmed in no time. When Hawaii first opened up to visitors with the single negative test, the cases on Kauai spiked. More in seven weeks than the previous seven months. That fact is undeniable, it happened, I live here. Standarding all islands on the single negative test disregards any differences in the islands and all in the name of tourism. I urge you to leave it up the counties. Let Kauai's mayor, and other mayors, do what makes sense for their county. Kawakami has my full support and I will vote accordingly. I urge you to vote NO!

HB-1286

Submitted on: 2/7/2021 8:11:48 PM

Testimony for PDP on 2/9/2021 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Linda Silverberg	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

I am totally opposed to HB 1286 because it forces Kauai into the UNSAFE travel program that has not worked for any of the other counties. This will undermine our current COVID arrival protocol that our mayor and our county have worked so hard at to keep our COVID incidence low. Even in the last two months almost every case of COVID has been travel related. The mainland is not safe and the other islands are not safe especially with the new variants. As far as travelers being "confused" when they are coming to Hawaii, I'm sure they can figure it out since every state has different criteria for travel and some counties within the states have different criteria for travel and people seem to be able to figure that out on their own without legislation. One size does not fit all and Kauai is not Oahu and we do not have the resources to support an unsafe travel plan. Please vote against this unsafe plan.

HB-1286

Submitted on: 2/7/2021 8:17:42 PM

Testimony for PDP on 2/9/2021 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Tammy Olson	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I am extremely in favor of this bill, as the livelihood of myself, my three young children, and many in my community have been devastated with the closing down of Kauai's economy due to the quarantining of travelers coming here. Kauai should be a part of the state's Safe Travels Program. Our small business has suffered and continues to suffer and we have lost nearly all of our revenue since March 2020. Please support this bill.

February 7, 2021
3209 Calle Quieto
San Clemente, CA 92672-3549
Homeowner, Kauai County, HI 96741

Hawaii State Legislature
Committee on Pandemic and Disaster Preparedness
Public Testimony on HR1286

Aloha, Committee Members and Legislative Body.

The year past is marked with the shipwrecks of policy disaster from a near-abandonment of Federal guidance during the global Covid-19 pandemic. It has resulted in our nation becoming the most dangerous nation on earth for its citizenry and its visitors.

There is a belief among those who wield power that in policy planning, it is economics that holds the trump card.

That convention is an unquestionable failure of power, demonstrating the root cause of popular mistrust in the power of government, a failed dynamic that mirrors the federal inaction, denialism and commodification of human lives demonstrated by statements of legislators in some states claiming that it is the duty of older Americans to die and allow the offspring of the fortunate and wealthy to experience an economic lifestyle so enjoyed in those representative halls of power.

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2020/mar/24/older-people-would-rather-die-than-let-covid-19-lockdown-harm-us-economy-texas-official-dan-patrick>

That HR1286 exacerbates that failed trend of policy is starkly illustrated in the numbers of infected residents within counties which chose to follow lax State guidelines that are not based in scientific data but in misinformation, or the willful ignorance of scientific data.

Kauai County has successfully demonstrated the preceding statements in its consistent low case numbers of infection in comparison to the counties which opted into State guidelines, guidelines which Kauai County mayor Kawakami has opted out from for the sake of his residential population's life and safety.

Economics means nothing to the dead.

The commodification of human life for a subsidization of the tourism industry in the Hawaiian Islands is a truly disgusting policy act and it must not be allowed to permeate the Hawaii State Legislature.

It is my choice to avoid travel to my beloved island because I would rather lose the material comforts of a wonderful home due quarantined neglect, than endanger the lives of those who embody the spirit of Aloha over the economic tourist dollar.

I will pick up the pieces of my neglected home at a later date, because one cannot raise our dead from failed policies of commodification of human life.

That neglect of morality is totally non-repairable.

Vote NO to HB1286

Sincerely,

Ronald Rodarte

Resident

3209 Calle Quieto,

San Clemente, CA 92672

rrodarte@cox.net

213-700-8114

Homeowner

Kauai County, HI 96741

HB-1286

Submitted on: 2/7/2021 8:33:15 PM

Testimony for PDP on 2/9/2021 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Dr. Martha Harkey	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

I strongly urge the legislature to vote against HB1286. As our previous experience with the Safe Travels program on Kaua'i has shown, a "one-size-fits-all" approach does not work for all counties in Hawai'i. This is especially important when you consider that not all counties have the same access to medical equipment and services.

When Kaua'i was part of the Safe Travels program last fall, we had approximately twice as many cases of Covid during that seven week period than during the entire previous seven months. This proves the point that a single negative test is not enough to prevent travel-related infections. Indeed, statistical analysis has shown that a single test will miss 30-40% of those tested. We know that the tests will be negative if a person is in the early stage of disease and/or has become infected while traveling, and the CDC has recommended a second test three to five days after arrival. So how can the legislature "legislate" that all counties follow this one test "Safe Travels" protocol?

Finally, at this time we seem to be at a critical period: Kaua'i has remained one of the safest counties in the country and we are vaccinating residents at record rates; however, we know that at least one of the more-infectious Covid variants has been identified in Hawai'i. This is NOT the time to have fewer restrictions and is it certainly NOT the time to mandate a "one-size-fits-all" program for all counties.

COMMITTEE ON PANDEMIC & DISASTER PREPAREDNESS
Rep. Linda Ichiyama, Chair

COMMITTEE ON LABOR & TOURISM
Rep. Richard H.K. Onishi, Chair

February 9, 2021

Regarding: HB1286

We say no to HB1286.

Improving Hawai'i's economy is not about letting visitors in. It is about keeping the virus out. The Safe Travels Program is, in itself, misguided because it lets in infected travelers and residents.

The State should not silence Mayor Kawakami's approach. The State should amplify it.

Maui, the Big Island and Kaua'i already conducted the Safe Travels Program research, demonstrating its shortcomings. Ignoring the obvious results is an insult to our intelligence and an assault on our well being.

Forcing Kaua'i to conform to a bad idea doesn't make the idea any better.

Thank you committee Chairs and members for your time and attention.

Sincerely,

Wendy Graetz
Jim Hoglen
Kalaheo, Kaua'i

HB-1286

Submitted on: 2/7/2021 8:46:34 PM

Testimony for PDP on 2/9/2021 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Robin Shannon	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

I live on Kauai and feel privileged to do so. One reason I am so thankful is how low our Covid 19 rate is. We have an island that turns out to be one of the safest in the world and I would like to see it stay that way. And it has been because we have been stricter about requirements of travelers. One of the reasons we have stricter requirements is we have very limited ICU space on our island. It is not confusing that we are different as we have plenty of people that follow the protocol. Why are some lawmakers trying to make us all the same? So that we end up with the higher rates the other islands have? We are not the same as the other islands, each island has traditionally had differences. Let us be and let us decide what we need for our island. Mayor Kawakami has done an excellent job for our island and at this point I feel like some lawmakers are trying to punish us for being Kauai. This new law is a direct slap in the face to us that live here and shows a complete uncaring attitude from the Oahu lawmakers who sponsored the bill. We tried your way before and it was quickly proven the Safe Travels program was responsible for people getting sick on our island.

February 7, 2021

To Whom It May Concern:

As American citizens and Kauai property owners, we are writing to express our support of HB 1286. A year ago, with so much uncertainty about what the Covid-19 pandemic would bring, it was reasonable to create travel restrictions to protect everyone. Over the past 12 months of trials and tribulations, we now have a better idea of what we are up against.

When we stayed at our property on Kauai almost a year ago, we could have never imagined it would be just about the last time anyone would be able to enjoy visiting our piece of paradise. Our rental bookings have been nonexistent since then, and even we as property owners and tax payers have not been able to visit Kauai due to the excessive and variable travel restrictions.

It is clear that the rest of the great state of Hawaii, save for Kauai, and even our home state of Alaska which is also challenged by having many remote communities, have managed to weather the Covid-19 storm adequately. We have done this by following a standard, state-wide, single pre-test travel policy. Case numbers have remained low and vaccines are being administered, yet still Kauai stays effectively locked down to anyone travelling in.

I personally am fully vaccinated, yet am still forced to stay on another island for 3 days with a second test before travelling to Kauai, or pay to stay at a resort bubble on island before going to my own property. This is totally unreasonable and exceedingly expensive. Even for those that have yet to receive a vaccine, the travel options to reach Kauai just don't make sense. A single pre-travel test is more than adequate to screen for active cases. Our home state of Alaska had a single pre-travel test policy in effect long before Hawaii came on board with the same plan, and both states have case numbers that are among the lowest in the nation. The bottom line is that visitors to Kauai deserve the same treatment as those who choose to travel to a different island in Hawaii. Having different restrictions for various islands creates unnecessary confusion and will dissuade travelers from visiting.

The collateral effects of maintaining an almost effective shut down on travel are not often considered when politics and emotions come into play, but we feel if HB 1286 is not approved, the ripple effects on Kauai will be much greater than those that Covid-19 currently pose. Businesses are being forced to close permanently, local residents are losing jobs, and it will take years or perhaps decades to climb back out of the economic sink hole that has been created.

The end of this Covid-19 pandemic is on the horizon and we can all do our part to make it happen sooner, but keeping Kauai shut out from the rest of the world is not the answer. We humbly ask that you consider the greater good of your beautiful state and approve HB 1286.

Respectfully,

Jesse and Carrie Hronkin

HB-1286

Submitted on: 2/7/2021 8:52:47 PM

Testimony for PDP on 2/9/2021 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
LindaPizzitola	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

I oppose HB 1286. It is not in the best interest of Kauai residents. Dr Evslin says it all in his TGI column:

The current Safe Travels program only requires a single pretest for a traveler to avoid quarantine. It has been well proven that a single test will miss 30% to 40% of those who are infected and traveling. A single test does not pick up anyone in the early stages of the disease or people who may have caught it during their travels.

The bill and the Safe Travels program ignore the CDC's travel recommendations, which include a pretest, a seven-day, self-quarantine, and a second test three to five days after arrival. The bill also forces mayors to ignore these recommendations. It is very important to note that our mayor, by opting out and then instituting the bubble resort concept, has had the following results:

w In 2020 our hotel occupancy was almost equal to the other counties. Maui and Kaua'i were both at about 33%. Most impressive, though, is that, from Jan. 17 to 23, 2021, Kaua'i's occupancy rate was at 19.7%, Maui at 20.1% and O'ahu at 21.7%. There is also a steady increase in tourists using the bubbles for the first few days of their trips, with more hotels and flights planned;

- Kaua'i's vaccination program has been one of the most-efficient and rapidly-moving programs in the country, partially due to our very-low case count and the ability to put our resources into vaccinations rather than illnesses;
- We remain one of the safest counties in the country. Our local businesses and residents enjoy the freedom of the least-restrictive tier 4, while O'ahu has climbed to tier 2 restrictions.

[...] We should not let down our guard at this junction. Kaua'i was in the Safe Travels program for about seven weeks. During that time, we doubled the number of cases we had in the entire previous seven months.

Virtually all the new cases were travel-related. Kaua'i opted out of the Safe Travels program and our numbers rapidly returned to less than one new case per day.

Maui remained in the program, and went from having about 1% of the cases in the state to having about 18% of the state's total number. They began to see 15 to 30 new cases per day, and the Big Island was not far behind.

I believe HB 1286 should die in committee. Allow the mayors to decide what is best for their counties as we rapidly immunize. With the good numbers on Kaua'i, we can and should further open the schools.

Bottom line: Don't force the mayors to ignore the CDC recommendations. Roll out the vaccines, find ways to use the new, easy-to-use tests, and celebrate our good numbers by further opening schools. Above all, let's not stumble at what could be the end of the worst of this pandemic.

...

Lee A. Evslin, M.D., is a board-certified pediatrician and fellow of The American Academy of Pediatrics. He is a former health-care administrator on Kaua'i and periodically writes a column for The Garden Island.

HB-1286

Submitted on: 2/7/2021 8:53:22 PM

Testimony for PDP on 2/9/2021 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Silverberg Thorne P.	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

I oppose HB 1286. Kaua'i has had the best preventative response to COVID-19, there is no good reason for us to abandon what is working so well. Every state has different travel requirements - we should be emulating the government plans that have been the most effective in protecting the their population while safely allowing visitors who agree to the rules that protect everyone. If people choose to travel to multiple destinations during a pandemic they should be responsible enough to learn what's required to visit those places. The responsibility is theirs. If they can't bother to learn the culture of where they are going to visit - they should NOT travel there. Major Kawakami has worked to protect ALL the people of Kaua'i. He has been successful. Why not choose a county plan that's been the most effective as an option?

Mahalo, Thorne Silverberg

Kilauea, Kaua'i.

HB-1286

Submitted on: 2/7/2021 8:54:22 PM

Testimony for PDP on 2/9/2021 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Douglas Shannon	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

As a resident of Kauai County, I am opposed to HB1286 because each island is different and therefore has different needs when it comes to fighting the Covid 19 virus. Under Mayor Kawakami's leadership, Kaua'i has the lowest COVID incidence in Hawai'i. As soon as we opened up under the so called "Safe Travels" policy our cases skyrocketed to a doubling of Covid cases in one month's time. After shutting down again in December, our numbers went back down. Compare this to Maui, which stuck with the Safe Travels plan, and has currently ballooned from 1% of the state's total cases to 18% today. The lieutenant governor's own Safe Travels Surveillance Study showed that the pre-departure test missed at least seven of 1,000 travelers — seven times the prediction of the state's travel plan. We need Mayor Kawakami's original plan of a second test to keep our island safe. One pre-travel negative test does not mean a traveler is safe. A significant number of travelers test positive AFTER arrival, causing spread in Hawai'i. I do not want to see Covid spreading like wildfire over a small island of 72,000 inhabitants with only 9 ICU beds. One reason for this bill is the misconception that the different rules for different islands is confusing, yet a poll by the Hawaiian Tourism Authority found that nearly 90% of visitors surveyed reported their visits were "excellent." This means that those travelers did not find anything about their trip to be "confusing". I ask that you please vote "no" on this bill for those reasons. Mahalo for reading this testimony.

HB-1286

Submitted on: 2/7/2021 8:55:03 PM

Testimony for PDP on 2/9/2021 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Tom Stirling	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

I am opposed to this bill. I stand to benefit if it is passed as I own a vacation rental that has been vacant now for almost 1 year. I am sure if it was passed that the G.P. would flock to my property and it would finally generate some income. Yet I would rather keep Kaua'i safe by maintaining the same requirements that have been in effect here and working here very well since Dec. 1st. I don't know why this bill is even being proposed. Kaua'i is doing better than any of the other islands with the entry requirements that we are now using. FAR BETTER!!!! Don't be stupid and change something that is working just fine. Let us decide for ourselves how we want to manage visitor arrivals on our island. I don't think we need the governor of the state to interfere. Go find something else to occupy your time with and leave us ALONE!!! If this bill is passed COVID cases will surely increase here on Kaua'i, which will create a major problem as our hospitals are not equipped to handle an influx of sick COVID patients. Once again, DON'T BE STUPID AND TRY TO CHANGE SOMETHING THAT IS WORKING JUST FINE. LEAVE US ALONE TO MAKE OUR OWN DECISIONS!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

HB-1286

Submitted on: 2/7/2021 8:56:45 PM

Testimony for PDP on 2/9/2021 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
judi glass	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

Hello

I am a travel advisor of 20 years with Virtuoso which is the leading travel organization globally. We have faced many challenges and are dealing with it as best possible. Our clients understand the travel rules for Hawaii as they do for all states and countries. We educate them and understand the rules. Hawaii is no different and compelling Kauai to give up their wonderful and amazing travel rules because you are concerned that travelers may be confused is ridiculous. We are the envy of everyone because we have a wonderful mayor and community that will sacrifice and adhere to the rules to keep this island safe. Our mayor has made a great plan for travelers and it is working very well. We get questions at Virtuoso all the time about travel rules all over the world. Yes clients are confused and they figure it out with our help or on their own with all the information available. Kauai is held in high regard in the travel community and rather than looking into this bill I would suggest you consider having all the other islands follow our protocols regarding all travel rules. It is apparent it is working to keep our island safe and our mayor is so appreciated for taking a stand. Please do not allow this bill to pass and isn't it better to have tourists confused than islanders sick with Covid?

19 Mahalo Judi Glass

HB-1286

Submitted on: 2/7/2021 8:57:54 PM

Testimony for PDP on 2/9/2021 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Carrie Hronkin	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

February 7, 2021

To Whom It May Concern:

As American citizens and Kauai property owners, we are writing to express our support of HB 1286. A year ago, with so much uncertainty about what the Covid-19 pandemic would bring, it was reasonable to create travel restrictions to protect everyone. Over the past 12 months of trials and tribulations, we now have a better idea of what we are up against.

When we stayed at our property on Kauai almost a year ago, we could have never imagined it would be just about the last time anyone would be able to enjoy visiting our piece of paradise. Our rental bookings have been nonexistent since then, and even we as property owners and tax payers have not been able to visit Kauai due to the excessive and variable travel restrictions.

It is clear that the rest of the great state of Hawaii, save for Kauai, and even our home state of Alaska which is also challenged by having many remote communities, have managed to weather the Covid-19 storm adequately. We have done this by following a standard, state-wide, single pre-test travel policy. Case numbers have remained low and vaccines are being administered, yet still Kauai stays effectively locked down to anyone travelling in.

I personally am fully vaccinated, yet am still forced to stay on another island for 3 days with a second test before travelling to Kauai, or pay to stay at a resort bubble on island before going to my own property. This is totally unreasonable and exceedingly expensive. Even for those that have yet to receive a vaccine, the travel options to reach Kauai just don't make sense. A single pre-travel test is more than adequate to screen for active cases. Our home state of Alaska had a single pre-travel test policy in effect long before Hawaii came on board with the same plan, and both states have case numbers that are among the lowest in the nation. The bottom line is that visitors to Kauai deserve the same treatment as those who choose to travel to a different island in

Hawaii. Having different restrictions for various islands creates unnecessary confusion and will dissuade travelers from visiting.

The collateral effects of maintaining an almost effective shut down on travel are not often considered when politics and emotions come into play, but we feel if HB 1286 is not approved, the ripple effects on Kauai will be much greater than those that Covid-19 currently pose. Businesses are being forced to close permanently, local residents are losing jobs, and it will take years or perhaps decades to climb back out of the economic sink hole that has been created.

The end of this Covid-19 pandemic is on the horizon and we can all do our part to make it happen sooner, but keeping Kauai shut out from the rest of the world is not the answer. We humbly ask that you consider the greater good of your beautiful state and approve HB 1286.

Respectfully,

Jesse and Carrie Hronkin

HB-1286

Submitted on: 2/7/2021 9:00:03 PM

Testimony for PDP on 2/9/2021 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Ethan Page	Lawai Market / Little Fish Coffee	Support	No

Comments:

To Hawai State legislature-

As a small business owner of two seperate businesses and a homeowner on Kauai. I would like to show my support of a state wide travel plan. It is important to keep the confusion down about traveling to Hawaii and we should have one uniform, clear plan for the whole state.

Thank You for your time.

Ethan Page

HB-1286

Submitted on: 2/7/2021 9:33:57 PM

Testimony for PDP on 2/9/2021 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Carol Ridgley	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

I oppose HB1286. I have lived on Kauai for 33 years. Mayors of each island understand each island's needs. When the time is right and safe for us residents, our Mayor Kawakami will relax visitors Covid19 requirements. We are all having financial problems but we are not sick or in the hospital. No to HB1286.

February 7, 2021

To: *Committee on Pandemic and Disaster Preparedness*
Honorable Rep. Linda Ichiyama, Chair, and committee members

Committee on Labor and Tourism
Honorable Rep. Richard H. K. Onishi, Chair, and committee members

From: Nancy J Budd

Re: TESTIMONY IN **OPPOSITION TO HB1286**

Aloha Chair Ichiyama and Chair Onishi and committee members,

HB 1286 removes the power of each island's Mayor to opt out of the "Safe Travels" program and also appears to remove the governor's ability to take emergency action in the face of a surge in COVID-19 cases. It further suggests that a single pre-arrival test is the only requirement to avoid quarantine. This has been shown to be inadequate as it will miss nearly 40% of those infected. With the confirmation of variants in the islands, this matter could not be more critical.

Our island of Kaua'i has, with strong and creative leadership and a willingness to follow the recommendations of top medical authorities, kept the COVID pandemic at bay. The underlying assumption of HB 1286 appears to be that by easing travel restrictions state-wide our economy will become robust, outweighing the significant concerns of medical experts.

By allowing greater numbers of infected persons into the State (including increasing numbers of those carrying the mutant strains) we will, instead, likely end up with another lockdown of our economy and significantly greater numbers of deaths- a lose-lose proposition on a grand scale.

Dr. Anthony Fauci, in an interview with Terry Gross a few days ago, stated that "*no one should be travelling.*" He explained that the more the virus replicates the more opportunity it has to mutate. "So when you have so much infection in the community as we have had in the US over the last few months that means the virus has almost an open playing-field to replicate... to mutate." Dr. Fauci also noted that as a country we are "not even close" to reaching 'herd immunity' despite the fact that more than 460,000 people have died; to get there would require an extraordinary and unnecessary sacrifice of lives. In Hawai'i, we have a lower seroprevalence (number of people having had the virus) and therefore we have a much greater percentage of our population who are vulnerable to disease and death from the virus.

Kaua'i island has a total of 9 ICU beds for any and all patients in need of them, not just those suffering from life-threatening cases of COVID-19. Expanding capacity to cope with a surge in COVID cases on Kaua'i is challenging, if not impossible, as both critical care infrastructure and trained personnel are extremely limited resources on Kaua'i. ***On Kauai, to date, we have not been able to vaccinate anyone other than those over the age of 75 and front-line workers.***

Regarding the economy, please note that in 2020 and in early 2021 (to date), Kauai's hotel occupancy was essentially equal to all other counties. Kauai's use of quarantine "bubbles", which require a negative test before leaving the bubble resort, has reduced the quarantine to a bare minimum for visitors and is proving popular. If the minimal protections so thoughtfully and carefully enacted by our Mayor are lifted, our local population will once again be unwilling to frequent local businesses, yet visitors will roam freely, whether they are contagious or not. And we will have neither a healthy economy nor a healthy population. By allowing the virus to continue to spread in the other counties in Hawai'i the single test plan is actually delaying economic recovery.

Dr. Fauci urges us to avoid all travel unless it is absolutely necessary, vaccinate as many people as quickly and efficiently as possible, and double-down on public health measures. It is critical that we in Hawaii carefully manage any travel to our islands right now, in the midst of the pandemic, rather than actively promote it.

We need to manage our tourism re-opening as an integral part of our public health plan which must allow our Mayor the latitude and power to protect the residents of Kaua'i, and all mayors in Hawai'i to be permitted and encouraged do the same.

HB-1286

Submitted on: 2/7/2021 9:40:57 PM

Testimony for PDP on 2/9/2021 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Roger Ridgley Jr	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

I oppose HB1286. Let the mayors do their jobs. One yer almost and our covid numbers are low except last October when Mayor Kawakami agreed with the Governor for covid negative tests for visitor arrivals. No to HB1286.

HB-1286

Submitted on: 2/7/2021 9:45:36 PM

Testimony for PDP on 2/9/2021 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
david sutton	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

Ladies and Gentlemen:

As a safe and secure resident of Kaua'i I oppose forcing our island to change course now in our Covid efforts. Our mayor and his team have worked hard to protect us and it is working. Please let us continue our success and once vaccinations are complete we can open more.

If the virus and variants spread, we would be handicapped much more than under current precautions. Please let each island work out its own plan.

Mahalo! David

HB-1286

Submitted on: 2/7/2021 9:54:05 PM

Testimony for PDP on 2/9/2021 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Walter Barnes	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

Aloha Chairs Ichiyama and Onishi, Aloha Committee Members

I'm writing in opposition to HB1286. One size doesn't fit all. Kaua'i's leadership deserves the right to make tighter travel decisions to protect our residents. Kauai knows by clear example what happens when we tried Safe Travels. Kauai got lots of imported infections which turned into community spread. Maybe that's OK for other islands that already have lots of community spread. But Kaua`i has little community spread and we deserve to be able to make our own decision if we do or do not want the consequences of Safe Travels.

I cannot imagine anything more local than community health. I cannot imagine anything more important than community health. I humbly urge you, please, don't let HB1286 take away our local choices.

Warmest Aloha,
Walt Barnes

HB-1286

Submitted on: 2/7/2021 9:56:57 PM

Testimony for PDP on 2/9/2021 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Anne	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Kaua'i residents are deeply grateful to Mayor Kawakami for standing firm on our behalf; Kaua'i has the lowest number of COVID cases in the state. By opting out of the state's travel policy, Mayor Kawakami has kept us safe. If the state government were to try to impose its policy on us, we would feel deeply betrayed, especially at a time when variants of the virus have been blamed for huge surges of cases, particularly in the UK, but possibly also in California. Some of these variants are now in Hawai'i, posing a huge threat, especially if more cases are imported. The current Safe Travels program only requires a single pretest for a traveler to avoid quarantine. It has been well proven that a single test will miss 30% to 40% of those who are infected and traveling. A single test does not pick up anyone in the early stages of the disease or people who may have caught it during their travels.

Please respect our wishes and our need to keep our island safe.

Written testimony opposing to Speaker Saiki's House Bill 1286

House Bill 1286 makes no sense given the current situation in Hawaii, or frankly anywhere, and is especially dangerous for the neighbor islands with limited medical resources. A prudent covid response requires a nuanced, science based approach.

It has been startling to many in the science and medical professions to see how some state leaders have used half truths, obfuscations, and actively lobbied against the science.

The ideas proposed by HB 1286 are partly based on two easily proven fallacies.

- 1) That the Safe Travels program is currently screening sufficiently and travels cases are not playing a significant role in our covid case counts. Data from communities worldwide, including our own Kaua'i, clearly shows that the single preflight test is not enough. The Safe Travels Surveillance Testing program showed that of the PCR tests done, 7 times the expected infected travelers were getting through. Rather than acknowledge that, the program was closed early and the reporting corrupted by including the Big Island's thousands of almost useless day of arrival antigen tests.
- 2) That a day of arrival antigen test is of much value. It is a non-starter. The science is clear that an antigen test done on an arrival day can't pick up a single infection that occurs during travel, and almost no infections a day or two before travel. After infection, viral levels take days to build to detectable levels, and only on day 4 can a significant number of positives be detected. The science is clear, and very easily verified, and yet this fallacy continues to be irresponsibly perpetuated.

In Hawaii, we are now in two races - one that we're all well aware of, and one that is an emerging threat.

- 1) The first race is to safely open to more visitors and boost the economy. To do so we need to continue our covid precautions, keep new cases down, and vaccinate as many people as possible, as quickly as possible. This is obvious.
- 2) But as of last week there is a second race we are now in. We need to outrun the arrival of the new coronavirus variants, three of which seem to be more contagious and two of which are not responding as hoped to the current vaccines. All are in the US, with at least one variant now confirmed in Hawaii.

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/transmission/variant.html>

<https://www.nytimes.com/2021/01/28/opinion/new-covid-strain.html>

As of yesterday two cases of variant B.1.1.7 (the U.K. variant) have been found on Oahu. It is especially worrisome because the infected individuals did not travel and are not connected to each other - which means that B.1.1.7 variant is now in the Oahu community. B.1.1.7 is estimated to have a transmission rate that is 30-40% higher than the more common variants. Fortunately it seems no more deadly, and the current vaccines seem to work on it. However more cases means more sickness and more deaths.

<https://www.staradvertiser.com/2021/02/07/hawaii-news/hawaii-sees-second-case-of-u-k-variant-108-new-infections/>

More alarmingly, variant B.1.351 (the South African variant) is now also in the US and unfortunately has forced both Pfizer and Moderna to reformulate their vaccines.

Variant P.1 (the Brazil variant) is most worrying, is now in the US, and seems to have spread in Brazil with three times the speed of the UK variant. Even more concerning is that it seems to have mutations allowing it to evade antibodies - which means current vaccines may not be nearly as effective, and that reinfection is possible.

<https://www.npr.org/sections/goatsandsoda/2021/01/27/961108577/why-scientists-are-very-worried-about-the-variant-from-brazil>

So what can we do?

We need to first acknowledge that our Safe Travels program is directly responsible for letting the B.1.1.7 variant in and it is just a matter of time before it lets the other variants in, if they are not here already. If the Safe Travels program is not modified immediately, we are rolling the dice on a 4th surge and should not pretend otherwise.

The Safe Travels Surveillance Testing Program's results were under-reported, but very telling. 2507 PCR tests on Oahu, Maui and Kauai showed that 7 travelers out of 1,000 were missed by the single preflight test. That is 7 times the predicted 1 of 1,000.

To put this into perspective, on January 30th Maui had about 3,000 arrivals. Statistically, it means at least 21 travelers arrived infected but not detected on that day alone. This doesn't include travelers who may very well have been infected on the 6 hour trans-pacific flight - something we now know happens regularly.

In promoting HB 1286, Speaker Saiki has said "health data does not show that travel is a predominant cause of COVID in Hawaii." This is at best a half truth, and to many quite misleading. It only becomes true after containment has failed and community spread is allowed to take hold. And then, with a constant injection of new travel related "patient zero" cases, the local population further suffers.

Lanai's 100+ person outbreak was promptly reported as community spread, yet properly screening a single traveler would have prevented all the other cases. It is common sense.

ALL our initial cases come from off island. And this will be the same with the variants. We can boast about having some of the lowest covid case counts in the nation, but that is because we're an island 2500 miles from the mainland, and not because of, but in spite of, our porous Safe Travels program.

Maui opened with 1% of the state's active cases and almost no community spread. Three months later, Maui now has 18% of the state's active cases. That was a mistake - many deaths would have been avoided and many more kids in school had their screening been more robust.

Maui, with 12% of the population has been getting 36% of the tourists. They receive 8 tourists for every traveling resident. Kaua'i was averaging 15 tourists for every traveling resident. Oahu has just 2 tourists for every traveling resident and far fewer visitors per capita. The islands could not be more different. They have extremely different visitor loads and therefore risk profiles. To try and treat them the same during this pandemic is a serious mistake.

Kaua'i opened, followed the data very carefully, and saw that virtually all the new cases were directly connected to travel. They wisely opted out before community spread became irreversible as it has been on

Oahu. Now Kauai can open schools, keep youth programs going, and at least maintain its local economy. Its health officials are able to more rapidly roll out the vaccine because they have so little active covid to contend with.

Just as looking at the statewide new case numbers missed the spike on Maui until it was too late, watching only the statewide curve will miss the now upward new variant curve.

The situation in Denmark makes this clear. Their old variant curve is going down, while their new variant curve is going up, faster. The problem is that while it may temporarily look like vaccinations will keep up, they very well may not. The same goes for Hawaii.

<https://www.sciencemag.org/news/2021/02/danish-scientists-see-tough-times-ahead-they-watch-more-contagious-covid-19-virus-surge>

Throughout the fall reopening, Hawaii has not followed the science, and while more jobs may have resulted, many deaths did as well. Perhaps it is a matter of priorities, but most other countries have prioritized differently. Many tourism reliant economies have remained shut down, prioritizing residents and open schools over tourism.

Here's a quote from the president of the Phuket Tourist Association which has announced plans to reopen their still closed tourism focused island after the population is vaccinated - in October 2021 - seven months from now.

“The safety of the people gets priority because tourists come and go but locals live here.”

Submitted by Steve O'Neal - former UN Disaster Response Team Lead - stephenoneal@gmail.com

HB-1286

Submitted on: 2/7/2021 10:04:06 PM

Testimony for PDP on 2/9/2021 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
melinda menezes, md	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

Kauai is a model. Our economy is open. Our health department is focused on vaccination not chasing community spread. The mainland is where virus comes from. Our two step testing is working. Kauai should be allowed to continue our safe measures. As a physician on Kauai for almost 20 years, I stand behind science and our Mayor. If you want to make it simple for travelers, have all the islands follow Kauai's lead. Two tests work.

HB-1286

Submitted on: 2/7/2021 10:17:40 PM

Testimony for PDP on 2/9/2021 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Simeon Grosse	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I believe the state has acted in its citizens best interests by allowing safe levels of tourism back to the state. My county mayor on Kauai has opted to attempt to keep our island safe by not allowing any tourism and now only very restrictive, expensive and complicated which deters tourists from Kauai. I believe the rules should be consistent across the state and if the rules are good enough for Oahu, Maui, and Hawaii they are good enough for Kauai. We are also in a stage where vaccinations are readily available yet our island still lives in isolation and restrictions. Our mayor cannot make the tough decision to live beyond fear and accept some risk. I support a consistent, statewide travel program.

HB-1286

Submitted on: 2/7/2021 10:49:26 PM

Testimony for PDP on 2/9/2021 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Mary Mulhall	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

Please continue to allow Kauai to set COVID standards for Kauai only.

Standards in place on Kauai have worked well. Other islands - not so much.

Please give Mayor Derek Kawakami and his team discretion to set the rules for Kauai only.

Mahalo,

Mary Mulhall

HB-1286

Submitted on: 2/7/2021 11:11:18 PM

Testimony for PDP on 2/9/2021 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
joan Levy	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

I am a resident of Kauai. And I am a psychotherapist by profession. I have seen the ravages of Covid on family systems, on the market place, in the rise of emotional and mental health problems. We have many emptied out buildings where thriving businesses used to be. So of course I would like to see Covid restrictions lifted. But at the same time I think our Kauai County government should be able to determine how and when those restrictions are lifted. Our islands are not the same. What is good for Oahu is not necessarily good for an outer island. What is good for Maui may not be good for Kauai. Each County knows its own needs better than the State government knows. Clearly travel is the main contributor to the spread of Covid. I do not think it is right for the State to override County decisions on how to deal with travel and testing. These decisions need to be determined on a County level. I urge you to vote NO on this bill.

Sincerely, Joan Levy

Testimony Re HB 1286
by JoAnn A. Yukimura
Before the Committee on Pandemic & Disaster Preparedness
and the Committee on Labor & Tourism
State House of Representatives
February 9, 2021

Chairs Ichiyama and Onishi and Committee Members:

Thank you for this opportunity to submit written testimony. My apologies for not appearing before you online. I am scheduled to take my 96-year old mother to Mahelona Hospital for her second COVID shot on Tuesday morning.

HB 1286 would have grave consequences for my lifelong home and community, the County of Kaua'i. HB 1286 would require Kaua'i County to follow the State's one-test travel policy, which is not safe.

Prior to October 15, when the state's plan went into effect, 60 COVID cases had been recorded on Kaua'i in the first seven months of the pandemic. One month after the state's plan took effect, Kaua'i's COVID caseload doubled to 120. Eighty percent of the post-reopening cases were incoming travelers.

Mayor Kawakami wisely opted out, and this week Kaua'i had only two new coronavirus cases compared to 283 cases this week on Maui. With 2.3 times the population of Kaua'i, Maui, which has participated in the state's travel plan, has had 26 COVID deaths, while Kaua'i has had one death, a dear friend of mine.

With life and death hanging in balance, HB 1286 would force Kaua'i to adopt a policy that would increase suffering and death in the county.

The only rationale I have heard for HB 1286 is that potential visitors are confused when there are different rules for different counties. To approve this bill based on that reason would validate the perception that a recent [Omnitrak poll](#) identified in 67% of Hawaii residents polled--that Hawai'i "is being run for tourists at the expense of local people."

HB 1286 would also force Kaua'i to go against a Centers for Disease Control recommendation. For U.S. citizens returning to America (a category of travelers akin to returning residents or visitors to Hawai'i), the CDC [states](#): "**Testing before and after travel is a critical layer to slow the introduction and spread of COVID-19.**" It

[recommends](#) a pre-departure test, a second test between 3-5 days after arrival, and post arrival quarantine for 7 days.

Some of us on Kaua'i have been [actively searching](#) since the beginning of the pandemic for a truly safe way to admit visitors and returning residents to Hawai'i.¹ We are acutely aware of the heartbreaking economic peril facing many businesses in Hawai'i due to Hawai'i's heavy dependence on tourism.

That's why we urged the New Zealand and Australian approach of stamping out the virus. New Zealand has a population of five million, over three times the population of Hawai'i. Yet, they have had a total of 2,320 COVID cases and 25 deaths. Hawai'i, with a much smaller population, has had 25,398 COVID cases and 415 deaths!

New Zealand's economy is booming. Students are back in school, face to face. Life is mostly normal, with stadium events and full indoor dining. The truth is, as Hawai'i economist Paul Brewbaker has said, "You don't [solve](#) the economic problem until the epidemiological problem is solved."

To continue with the state's unsafe travel plan will only delay Hawai'i's economic recovery, especially as travel brings in the more contagious variants. But to force a county that has successfully chosen a safer path to now follow an unsafe plan that will endanger the health and wellbeing of its people--and delay economic recovery--would be unconscionable.

Your basic responsibility as elected officials is to protect public health and safety. Please hold Bill 1286 in committee.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "JoAnn A. Yukimura". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

JoAnn A. Yukimura

¹ [A Plan for Safely Reopening Hawai'i: Kaua'i as a Model](#)

HB-1286

Submitted on: 2/8/2021 12:19:31 AM

Testimony for PDP on 2/9/2021 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Jill Lowry	Anaina Hou Community Park	Oppose	No

Comments:

RE: HB 1286

February 7th, 2021

Jill Lowry

Executive Director – Anaina Hou Community Park

5-2723 Kuhio Hwy, Kilauea, HI 96756

jillwlowry@anainahou.org 808-977-7655

Good Morning,

Thank you for reading my testimony regarding bill HB 1286, and considering my opposing position.

In my role as E.D. of a nonprofit that lost 95% of our revenue due to COVID-19, I remain convinced that while the nation, our state, and Kaua'i County are in an economic crisis, on Kaua'i, our community members remain alive solely because of the decisive and fore-thinking decisions that have been made by our local leaders regarding quarantines, travel, and opting out of the Safe Travels program.

I can appreciate the desire to have consistent rules of order during the chaos our world continues to navigate, thinking that somehow a normal process will create the stability we all crave and return us to economic health, but I would state that a cookie-cutter approach to a pandemic should not be the goal. We are in unprecedented times, which has and will continue to require herculean and courageous thinking, and decision-making based on what is actually working in each segment of our society, by the leaders in the appropriate departments and communities in question.

The reality is that on Kaua'i tourism is slowly finding some footing, not all at once, but rather in a manner that protects our community and our visitors, and is allowing some freedom for families and our Kupuna to move about safely. Economics continues to be challenging, but, throwing caution to the wind when we are so close to the final stages of a hard-fought battle would be beyond foolish.

My opposition to bill HB 1286 however is not just on behalf of Kaua'i, but each county. Each county should be able to govern its own unique Moku through COVID-19 with the support and knowledge of State level health and government officials.

Personally, I do not feel that the Safe Travel Program has ever been safe or effective, but ultimately these are decisions that our Mayors should be able to determine for their own counties based on each county's individual needs. Our state is not contiguous and its geological structure is a gift that allows for creative measures not available to other states.

Please continue to allow our Mayors to determine what their individual counties need during these challenging times; the time will come again to revert to a consistent rule of order, but that time is not yet upon us.

With respect and appreciation for your thoughtful consideration.

Jill Lowry

Executive Director

Anaina Hou Community Park

HB-1286

Submitted on: 2/8/2021 1:03:49 AM

Testimony for PDP on 2/9/2021 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
ellen sofio	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

Testimony on HB 1286

Ellen Sofio M.D.

2/7/21

I am writing to strongly oppose passage of HB1286. The pre-travel testing program this bill seeks to force on the entire state without possibility of exemption is inherently unsafe, based on a pre-travel PCR test which is known to miss up to 30% of positive cases. The surveillance of this program last fall involved the inappropriate use of a BD Veritor rapid antigen test designed for use during the first 5 days of suspected symptomatic COVID 19, and never tested or expressly intended in its emergency use authorization for one time surveillance testing of asymptomatic individuals, which is how it was recklessly used.

According to UH epidemiologist Dewolfe Miller who was allegedly overseeing the surveillance, the protocol was "written for me by rear Admiral Louis Tripoli of the Indo-Pacific command". The Navy and the DOD apparently had a vested interest in guaranteeing that the pre-travel testing program would get the green light, putting a non-epidemiologist physician in charge of the protocol and permitting the use of an insensitive test in a setting it was clearly not designed for.

Even with this faulty protocol, the surveillance detected missed positive cases in 7 out of 1,000 cases, seven times the predicted rate of 1 in 1,000. With 10,000 arriving travelers daily that would mean 70 undetected positive cases getting off planes here per day without quarantine obligations . 20,000 arrivals would mean 140 per day and 30,000 would rise to 210 missed positive COVID 19 cases entering our island communities every 24 hours. This is completely unacceptable, and its consequences were made

evident in the alarming surge that occurred on Kaua'i immediately after it was briefly adopted there prior to Mayor Kawakami's wise decision to opt out.

With recent more lethal, contagious and vaccine resistant viral escape mutations from South Africa and spontaneous similar occurrence in a subset of the UK variant in the UK (E484K) it becomes even more dangerous and irresponsible to perpetrate this reckless program on our island population, and it rather than being standardized, it should be immediately shut down completely.

I strongly oppose this bill which will prove to be genocidal for many innocent and vulnerable island residents and which I would characterize as incompetent at best and criminally negligent at worst because it not only supports but tries to generalize and remove current opt out provisions for a faulty and dangerous testing program masquerading as protection.

Anyone who genuinely cares about the long term well being of our island community must vote decisively against HB 1286. Mahalo for your kind attention.

Ellen Sofio M.D

HB-1286

Submitted on: 2/8/2021 1:24:56 AM

Testimony for PDP on 2/9/2021 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Kristen Ma	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

Honorable Representatives,

I oppose HB1286. The arrival requirements set by the bill are lower than current requirements in every county of the state. Negative test results should be required to be received and printed or uploaded prior to boarding, in order to qualify for avoiding quarantine. Otherwise, people will fly with pending results, and some of them will discover their tests are positive after arrival in Hawaii. This was happening during the first phase of the Safe Travels program, and the governor changed the requirement because of it. Now, while many other states and countries are strengthening their arrival requirements because of continuing spread and new strains of the virus, this bill instead seeks to go backwards.

This bill would also remove the mayors' ability to work with the governor to develop rules appropriate for their counties' unique situations, and respond quickly to changing conditions. Governor Ige has repeatedly acknowledged how important these abilities are. Kaua'i County, where I live, has instituted innovative arrival procedures more in line with CDC recommendations than any other county, led by the mayor with unanimous support of our County Council. These procedures incentivize a second test after three days, an important safety measure to ensure that infections can be identified before community exposure. Up to 40% of new infections can go undetected by the first pre-travel test, due to the incubation period of the virus. Testing immediately upon arrival would also fail to catch the majority of these infections. HB1286 would eliminate these science-based policies and replace them with a single-test system, which the CDC specifically recommends against.

If more consistency is needed, then let the other counties follow Kauai's example and institute the same arrival requirements. If better enforcement of existing policies is needed, then start today in improving enforcement. Surely a bill is not needed for that.

We are weeks away from vaccine availability for all of our most vulnerable residents, including those between 65 and 75 and those with high-risk health conditions, who are still anxiously waiting for their turn. Immunity takes two doses plus two weeks to develop. We are in a race between the vaccine and the disease, which has been kept at bay in our communities thanks to science-based policies and considerable work and

sacrifice. Please don't give the virus a head start at this critical juncture. Now is not the time to let down our guard.

HB-1286

Submitted on: 2/8/2021 1:42:22 AM

Testimony for PDP on 2/9/2021 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
lauryn galindo	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

I feel blessed to be a resident of Kauai. Our Mayor has forged an independent path which has kept our Covid-19 infection rates the lowest in the state. I oppose this bill because it restricts counties from making independent policies which best serve their population.

HB-1286

Submitted on: 2/8/2021 2:31:06 AM

Testimony for PDP on 2/9/2021 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Mervet Yassin	Sky High Enterprises LLC	Support	No

Comments:

I fully support this bill which would would create consistent travel restrictions for the entire state of Hawaii and do away with the different county requirements.

HB-1286

Submitted on: 2/8/2021 2:55:50 AM

Testimony for PDP on 2/9/2021 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Patrice Pugh	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

Re: Testimony regarding HB 1286 (Against)

Statewide Safe Travels Program

Aloha Honorable Representatives,

I am a resident of Maui County and I am against this proposed bill.

Currently the only safe county in Hawaii is the one which does NOT participate in Hawaii's safe travels program. Kauai, with great accolades to Mayor Kawakami and Dr. Janet Berreman, had the foresight and ability to evaluate their islands health relating to travel and take action to limit disease transmission coming from outside sources. With Kauai's strict protocols, they are able to detect positive cases related to travel, which otherwise would have slipped thru with inadequate testing. With these protocols, Mayor Kawakami has succeeded in minimizing incoming cases due to his stringent plan. Other counties have asked for stronger or various other restrictions, yet have been denied.

Fortunately because our state is remote, Hawaii has done better than most because we required testing or quarantine. This has stalled Covid from entering Hawaii at a more rapid rate when compared to the other states. But now we need to make the safe travels program even safer. One test 72 hours prior to arrival is not the best or only option that we have.

While other countries and lawmakers are trying to enforce stricter compliance, Hawaii is attempting to accommodate unsound tourism at the high cost to it's residents. The Director of the CDC Dr. Rochelle Walensky "I want to emphasize that now is not a good time to be traveling, period, internationally or domestically," yet some people in Hawaii are trying to lessen the restrictions to help travelers cope with our entry requirements. I

would like to welcome visitors, but only with sufficient precautions that would ensure our islands safety.

On February 5, 2021 Dr. Walensky indicated that cases, hospitalization admissions, and deaths all remain high. The US has more infections than any other country in the world, by far. Currently The United States is a Risk Assessment Level 4 and they advise against tourism to other countries that are also Level 4. This indicates that there is significant community transmission and means that travelers who take a test 72 hours prior to travel have high chances of becoming infectious before even arriving here. The CDC warns of Do NOT travel if you were exposed to Covid-19, you are sick, or you have tested positive for COVID-19. With asymptomatic carriers, many do not know that they were exposed. This indicates that travelers should be informed and knowledgeable of their covid status PRIOR to getting on a flight.

Spread that occurs in aircraft isn't tracked, so to many it looks like travel isn't a form of transmission to Hawaii, yet one test 72 hours prior to travel is meaningless. Those travelers could be infected within that time frame and when they arrive in Hawaii can unknowingly contribute to cases. Most of these travelers are not tested here and therefore we have no way of knowing how many have spread the disease and then departed, so it all appears to count toward community spread. People often times learn they have been infected with SARS-CoV-2 long after they may have passed the virus to others. That's not considering the asymptomatic carriers.

With 90,000 visitors to Maui in December, that amount is more than 55% of our population. Those visitors are coming from states with very high levels of positive cases. DOH reports 15% of December cases were travel related, split evenly between visitors and residents. We are now taking the brunt of tourism in all of Hawaii per capita. One day this past week, our amount of visitors exceeded those of Oahu! Since it is a more complicated process to enter Kauai, many of those visitors have and will choose to come here. As we are all aware, Kauai has 0-1 cases per day, whereas Maui has averaged 19 per day in the past weeks. We need more protection not less.

It is well known and documented that SELF-QUARANTINE DOES NOT WORK. There are many loopholes with quarantine and admittedly we have had a lack of contact tracers. If travelers are allowed to arrive without a test, the positive cases will be flowing in. For people unexpectedly testing positive here, there will be the scramble for appropriate accommodations that can manage them. There are multitudes of people

they have come in contact with prior to arriving, during their travels, and while visiting, and we have to rely on the integrity of the traveler to self-quarantine.

It is also well known that many people don't want to comply with mandatory mask use, or recommended social distancing. Many travel here from states who have denied safety and health recommendations or had no mandates at all. The non-compliance and disbelief throughout the United States is frightening. Yet they bring that mindset with them when coming here for a vacation during a pandemic.

The only hope is that we may be on the brink of achieving vaccinations, although an established vaccine supply isn't reliable at this time. There are also unknowns about vaccines: How long will people have some immunity from covid? Will boosters be needed? Will they be effective against variants? Can children be vaccinated? Will vaccines prevent transmission? Will vaccinated people be carriers of an asymptomatic infection? The more established surveillance programs in other countries have provided important warnings about variants of concern that can impact the U.S, and we should use every resource and be preemptive in our actions.

Due to Hawaii's unique geographic remoteness, since travel will dictate our level of health, we need to err on the side of caution and be even more diligent rather than more lenient in how we accept and perform testing for tourism. The state cannot depend on one entity to govern each island adequately. I would like the Department of Health to have more input into each islands specific needs. Some officials are not effectively handling our concerns.

If the goal is to truly have a uniform entry protocol for the state of Hawaii, then we should have stricter policies in place, rather than lenient ones. As a resident of Hawaii I am expecting you to make a decision that doesn't put tourism in front of our health. We don't need tourism, we need SAFER Tourism. The main structure of a pandemic is that travel causes spread.

I recommend a compromise. Something comparable to: 72 hour Pre test, 3-5 day mandatory monitored quarantine, and a mandatory post-test, and have the mayors take a prompt from Mayor Kawakami. Oahu needs to consider the outer islands and know that they are individuals each with specific situations unique to their communities.

It's the new year 2021, there isn't one country, one state, one county, or one community that hasn't suffered the damage of this covid pandemic. Please don't diminish the effects it is capable of causing because it hasn't hit Hawaii hard yet. There are still plenty of unknowns and they can be deadly with significant repercussions for Hawaii if we are not prepared and diligent in our stance.

Mahalo, Patrice Pugh

HB-1286

Submitted on: 2/8/2021 4:52:38 AM

Testimony for PDP on 2/9/2021 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
daniel rappaport	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

Kauai should be allowed to make its own COVID travel policies.

I have been a visitor to Kauai for the past 4 weeks and plan to remain here for another 10 weeks. We came to Kauai because of its low COVID numbers and strict quarantine policies. The EQM is working. It is not confusing. The whole state should adopt the EQM resort bubble policies. At least let Kauai keep their policies. I believe tourism to Kauai will reduce if they remove the EQM resort bubble and second test.

HB-1286

Submitted on: 2/8/2021 6:14:05 AM

Testimony for PDP on 2/9/2021 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Roland Jones	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha I feel strongly that with all the precautions in place we have to let people get back to making money in tourism to support family or just themselves as many people are lining up on the highway for food support at Lihue. People will have lower self esteem with this and are less likely to go back to work thank you Roland Jones

HB-1286

Submitted on: 2/8/2021 6:15:17 AM

Testimony for PDP on 2/9/2021 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
michael davis	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Dear members of the Legislature of Hawaii:

The opportunity to provide comment is greatly appreciated. My wife and I are frequent travelers to Hawaii on business and pleasure for the past 10-years and are previous property owners on the big island.

We would appreciate a consistent approach that is clearly communicated to all travelers and one that is convenient and provides a reasonable level of safety. The current process is not well communicated and is not convenient. In the absence of simplicity, our friends, family and business associates have chosen to cancel our trips. Until entry is simplified (that does not mean lack of controls) returning to Hawaii simply will not happen.

What is necessary for travelers is simple:

1. One policy for the islands
2. Allowing major U.S. medical facilities using approved test methods to provide rapid testing and results prior to boarding aircraft. End these trusted partners who cannot provide results prior to departure.
3. Completing the 24-hour log into the site, instantly obtain a registration number. The traveler provides the registration number/certificate and copy of the valid test results to the airline for boarding and upon airport arrival. That's it, they have no further obligation other than to follow mask protocols and enjoy their trip.
4. Travel between the islands is not restricted and all airports and Islands accept the registration number and the negative test results

We have confirmed reservations for Maui, Hawaii and Oahu in April if the new rules make sense and are in place by March 2021 we will arrive as planned. If the travel restrictions are not modified, then our trips will be cancelled until the rules are clear, consistent and convenient to provide a reasonable level of safety.

Your efforts to assure safe travel and transparency are appreciated.

Sincerely,

Michael Davis

HB-1286

Submitted on: 2/8/2021 6:44:06 AM

Testimony for PDP on 2/9/2021 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Diane Christofferson	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

Re: Testimony regarding HB 1286 (Against)

Statewide Safe Travels Program

Aloha Honorable Representatives:

I am writing from the island of Maui against this proposed bill.

This bill would strip mayors of their ability to protect their counties. Here are the reasons why I am against it:

1. Not all of the Hawaiian Islands are in the same situation and therefore should not be treated the same. They all have different resources—some islands do not have hospitals, while Maui has one. The one hospital that we do have has been of major concern to residents, as it has been the cause of several clusters here and has been completely full at times.

2. Maui has suffered terribly since mid-October, with cases rising steadily. Our numbers have been rising dramatically but are being ignored because the overall state numbers did not increase at a similar rate compared to the population and news is very much Honolulu-centric. Our Mayor made a promise when he agreed not to opt out of the Safe Travels Plan that he would reinstate quarantine once cases rose to 4.99 per 100,000 (so 7.5 for Maui island). Once the numbers increased past that, he said that he had decided not to use the tier system (in other words, he reneged on his promise to his constituents). The target for re-instating quarantine kept moving as we reached higher numbers, and now he says that he won't do much unless the one hospital we have is overrun. At least we have that option. In this plan, even if the hospital is overrun, there would be no option of opting out of the Safe Travels Plan. It was reported on KITV on 2/1/21 that the Maui hospital was indeed full.

3. Mayor Kawakami has been the best leader by far in the way he has handled this situation. He is the best advocate who cares about the residents of his island. He is my hero, and the majority of Maui residents wish that he was our mayor. This bill would strip him of his ability to protect Kauai, and is probably targeted specifically at him.

4. The bill calls to allow people to arrive here first and then test. This strategy was tried on all islands and failed. Maui had trailers to care for these people and contracted with a resort hotel here to take these people in. The bill calls for people to be responsible for their own quarantine costs, but that's not the way it works. When the visitor has a reservation at an Air B&B, they cannot go there if they test positive, so we become

responsible to handle their lodging. Hotels will often not accept people they know are positive, and we become responsible for their lodging. The point of bringing visitors in for the profit is completely dashed, as now we are responsible to pay for their expenses.

5. A fifth reason that I oppose this measure is that not all the islands are being treated the same as far as vaccines. State leadership apparently decided on an 11% allotment for Maui, which did not cover our needs in any way, probably due to the high number of part-time residents, or snowbirds, we have. There were other issues such as the use of VAMS where tourists could and did sign up for the vaccine here. The online request system was very difficult and many seniors were not able to manage it, however for others it was very easy to lie and many who got the vaccine should not have been eligible. The state is planning to finish tier 1b by the end of February, and we have no idea whether we will be back open for vaccines by then. What we do know is that we will be nowhere close to finishing up 1b along with the rest of the state. In other words, Maui will be even less protected than the rest of the state.

6. LG Green is proposing to waive tests for travelers who are vaccinated, believing that the vaccine causes sterilization immunity. The research is still being done on this, and opening up based on unproven research is not a good idea and endangers us unnecessarily.

7. Lastly, Maui's tourism numbers are much higher per capita. We have about 11% of the population but at least 36% of the tourists. Making decisions about travelers affects Maui much more than O'ahu, which we have seen with the Safe Travel Plan since mid-October.

Please vote against this bill. Think about the impact on the neighbor islands, which are part of the state. One size does not fit all!

Mahalo for your time and attention.

Diane

HB-1286

Submitted on: 2/8/2021 6:51:25 AM

Testimony for PDP on 2/9/2021 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Linda Spade	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

I oppose HB 1286 as it does not protect the residents of Hawaii, particularly with the new mutations of the coronavirus originating in England, which is 50% more contagious and the strain from Africa. There's no predicting what other mutations of the virus will occur.

One can test negative to the coronavirus on day, and be asymptomatic, and the next day test positive. In the meanwhile, one would be transmitting the virus to everyone they come in contact with.

If proper measures had been instituted from the onset of the virus a year ago, our economy would be functioning and we would not still be wearing masks and following CDC protocol. Instead, legislators keep reopening the economy every time there's a dip in the statistics.

Many on the mainland feel the mask mandate is too onerous to follow as if it is affecting their personal freedom instead of protecting their lives as well as those around them. I have personally observed tourists not complying with mask mandate and congregating in large groups.

Please do not sacrifice the well being of the residents of Hawaii on the altar of capitalism.

Sincerely, Linda Spade

HB-1286

Submitted on: 2/8/2021 6:52:05 AM

Testimony for PDP on 2/9/2021 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Amy Hale	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I fully support HB 1286.

It is well reported that allowing each island to make their own travel rules has impacted the recovery of ALL islands. Travelers are weary of the ever changing rules and confusing differences between the islands.

As a resident of Kauai, I have seen the effects that our Mayor's travel restrictions have had on our community. High unemployment, long standing businesses shut down for good, long lines at the food distribution sites, increased crime, and homeless camps growing by the day.

While I understand our limited healthcare availability, there has been nothing done to improve this over the last year. No new ICU beds were added, even though this was touted as the main reason for our strict travel rules.

With Kauai's "temporary pause" on the safe travels program, the Mayor told us it was until mainland numbers were down, and community spread was under control. That time has come and there is still no talk of rejoining the program to give our island some much needed economic relief. We can't continue to suffer at the will of our Mayor.

In addition, 10% of mainland residents and 20% of Kauai residents have been vaccinated to date. The risk from travelers is decreasing daily with more and more people being vaccinated, yet no talk of opening our island back up to travelers.

Unlike other states, we don't have the luxury of seeking work in an adjacent county. We are suffering greatly while watching other islands begin to recover. Why should we continue to be forced out of our jobs and homes while the rest of the state is slowly getting back on track?

With the increased need for government programs such as unemployment, SNAP and Medicaid, and a large budget shortfall, time is of the essence in getting state revenues back up. A statewide, cohesive program for tourism would go a long way in doing that.

HB-1286

Submitted on: 2/8/2021 6:57:23 AM

Testimony for PDP on 2/9/2021 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Lee Evslin	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

Testimony in Opposition to HB 1286

I am Lee Evslin, M.D. testifying in strong opposition to HB 1286. I have lived and worked as a physician on Kaua`i since 1979 and have served as the CEO of Wilcox Hospital and Kaua`i Medical Clinic. I am well aware of our limited medical care delivery system. I stand in opposition to this bill for the following reasons.

- Forcing each county to comply with the Safe Travel's program, forces each county to ignore the CDC travel guidelines which call for a second test after arrival and a short quarantine.
- The UK variant played a significant role in the UK's surge in cases.
- The UK variant is now doubling every 10 days in the US mainland. It is in Hawai`i already and will come in greater numbers with more pan-Pacific travelers. It is thought to be 30-50% more communicable.
- The science is very clear that a Safe Travels program, relying on a single pretest will miss 30-40% of those infected because the test cannot pick up people in the early days of the infection.
- Since leaving the Safe Travels Program, Kaua`i returned to virtually no cases and Maui, while staying in the program, went from having about 1% of the state's cases to having 18% of the state's cases.
- In the next several months, most of our most vulnerable should be immunized.
- Let Kaua`i continue to safely open its schools, further immunize the frontline and the vulnerable.
- In two months, Kaua`i will be in a much better position to know where the state and country stand with the disease and our most vulnerable and susceptible will be immunized.
- Kaua`i should not be forced at this time to abandon almost a year of sacrifice when we may be so close to the end and the risk is great.

Please stand in opposition to this bill, let the leadership on Kaua`i make the necessary decisions about opening as we all learn together over the vital next two months

Mahalo,

Lee A. Evslin, M.D.
Kapaa, HI



**Testimony to the House Committee on Pandemic & Disaster Preparedness,
House Committee on Labor & Tourism
Tuesday, February 9, 2021 at 8:30 A.M.
Via Videoconference**

RE: HB 1286, RELATING TO TRAVEL

Chairs Ichiyama and Onish, Vice Chairs Eli and Sayama, and Members of the Committees:

The Chamber of Commerce Hawaii ("The Chamber") **supports** HB 1286 which:

1. Exempts any person from the post-arrival mandatory self-quarantine if the person receives a negative test result prior to arrival;
2. Allows DOH to establish conditions for exemption
3. Requires certain COVID-19 tests for travelers who do not have a test result upon arrival to avoid mandatory self-quarantine;
4. Requires any person who receives a positive test for COVID-19 post-arrival to be responsible for all costs associated with that person's mandatory self-quarantine; and
5. Repeals on 12/31/2021.

The Chamber is Hawaii's leading statewide business advocacy organization, representing 2,000+ businesses. Approximately 80% of our members are small businesses with less than 20 employees. As the "Voice of Business" in Hawaii, the organization works on behalf of members and the entire business community to improve the state's economic climate and to foster positive action on issues of common concern.

In a new Pulse of Business survey¹ conducted in partnership with Omnitrak and with the support of Central Pacific Bank Foundation, the Hawaii Chamber of Commerce Foundation found the economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic continues to have dramatic consequences for local businesses. The Pulse of Business results are not surprising and that one primary issue facing businesses is the cost of paying higher unemployment taxes in 2020 while they continue to suffer from the economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.

¹ Survey finds Hawaii businesses reeling from lost revenue, cutting jobs, and expecting a long road to recovery
<https://www.staradvertiser.com/2021/02/02/breaking-news/survey-finds-hawaii-businesses-reeling-from-lost-revenue-cutting-jobs-and-expecting-a-long-road-to-recovery/>



Chamber of Commerce HAWAII

The Voice of Business

The Pulse of Business survey found that:

- Many local businesses attributed a drastic drop in revenue to waning tourism, even if they were not directly involved in the visitor industry. A drop in visitor arrivals was the single most important factor impacting employee cutbacks.
- Island companies face a long road to recovery that they expect will extend into April 2022.
- Eighty percent of the businesses that participated in the survey are small businesses with 20 or fewer employees.
- Many local businesses attributed a drastic drop in revenue to waning tourism, even if they were not directly involved in the visitor industry. A drop in visitor arrivals was the single most important factor impacting employee cutbacks.
- Revenues fell an average of 45% from 2019 to 2020, with no significant differences between Oahu and neighbor isles.
- Almost half (45%) reduced their workforce. The percentage would have been higher (63%) if businesses had not received federal Paycheck Protection Program funds.
- Businesses that had to cut jobs laid off a median of one in three workers in 2020. On neighbor isles, cuts were even greater, with five in nine employees laid off due to the pandemic.

Without tourists returning to the state, it is extremely clear that our economy will continue to wane with no relief in sight. Given our reliance on tourism, we must find a way to bring people back to our state to breath life back to our local businesses.

Thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony.

HB-1286

Submitted on: 2/8/2021 7:30:11 AM

Testimony for PDP on 2/9/2021 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Katie Seyl	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I am in support of HB1286. I believe this bill is necessary to allow Kauai to reopen, allow for visitors following consistent regulations with the other islands, and to allow the economy of Kauai to improve. The small businesses, the rental properties and the island as a whole has been negatively impacted by staying closed. By allowing for the testing and entry requirements to be in line with the other islands, it give Kauai a chance to rebuild.

HB-1286

Submitted on: 2/8/2021 7:32:11 AM

Testimony for PDP on 2/9/2021 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Stephanie Austin	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

Please do not support this very bad bill! It is outrageously 'Oahu Centric" - taking authority from the mayors of neighbor islands to protect their VERY DIFFERENT populations from Covid-19! The 'one Hawaii' idea is so transparently an idea promoted by the visitor industry - so as not to 'be confusing' and thus maybe limit the number of visitors. Perhaps: but at the cost of the health, and possibly LIVES of residents? All of the neighbor islands have limited medical facilities - and some, none to speak of at all! Critical patients cannot be driven to neighboring medical facilities, as on the mainland.

Please vote against this bill! I live on Maui, one of the majority of kupuna who have not been able to receive their FIRST dose of vaccine - and Oahu has mass vaccination clinics. Do not make us more vulnerable than we already are!
And if you have any doubts about the wisdom of a Mayor over a Governor or other centralized authority: compare (population taken into account) Kauai's infection numbers with Maui, Oahu, or the Big Island. Economies recover: disability from this disease can be life-long, and death is permanent.

HB-1286

Submitted on: 2/8/2021 7:37:58 AM

Testimony for PDP on 2/9/2021 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Rhone Scoggins	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

Honorable Legislature, I do not support HB1286. Because we opted out, Kaua'i has had the lowest incidence of COVID cases in the state which proved that one negative test is not enough before arriving in Hawaii. Mahalo!

Sincerely, Rhone Scoggins

HB-1286

Submitted on: 2/8/2021 7:46:01 AM

Testimony for PDP on 2/9/2021 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Karen J Comcowich	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

Aloha Members of the House,

I OPPOSE HB 1286 in its current form.

The outer counties do not have the same hospital capacity and quality as Oahu. Further the outer counties receive a greater percentage of tourist to residents.

We (the residents of outer counties) are further frustrated because although we crushed that curve and our numbers were excellent in October, since the “safe travels” program opened our numbers have gone up and we have been asked to lock down longer and far more than the tourists that are visiting. Major family events like weddings, baby showers, graduations and funerals are restricted to drive by for “our safety.” It seems futile when our friends and family have to go to work with visitors, who yes tested, but could still be positive. While most visitors are respectful there are many entitled tourists who feel like they tested so they are safe and don’t see why they should have to wear a mask or wear it properly. In December I was sure the hotels were full because the island was so packed, but it turns out on Maui hotel occupancy was low but Vacation Rentals were at 40%, these have less oversight than hotels and bring less money into the state because guests are primarily cooking their own meals.

However, I understand the need for a uniform safe travels program. I would SUPPORT a stricter safe travels program which could read as follows:

Exempts any person from the post-arrival mandatory self-quarantine if the person receives a negative test result prior to arrival, FOLLOWED BY A SECOND TEST UPON ARRIVAL. DOES NOT allow DOH to establish conditions for exemption. Requires certain COVID-19 tests for travelers who do not have a test result upon arrival FOLLOWED by a 5 day mandatory self-quarantine AND A SECOND NEGATIVE TEST. Requires any person who receives a positive test for COVID-19 post-arrival or WHO MUST QUARANTINE to be responsible for all costs associated with that person's mandatory self-quarantine AT A HOTEL. Repeals on 12/31/2021 OR WHEN PROTOCOL ARE WEAKED.

We need tourism but it must work for the residents, and residents' health and happiness must be the priority.

Sincerely,

Karen J. Comcowich, Lahaina, HI



STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE
OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR OF EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT
3949 DIAMOND HEAD ROAD
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96816-4495

STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE
HAWAII EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY

TESTIMONY ON HOUSE BILL 1286,
RELATING TO EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

Before the House Committees on
PANDEMIC & DISASTER PREPAREDNESS
AND
LABOR & TOURISM

By

Luke P. Meyers
Administrator, Hawaii Emergency Management Agency (HI-EMA)

Aloha Chairs Ichiyama and Onishi, Vice-Chairs Eli and Sayama, and Members of the Committee:

House Bill 1286 exempts any person from the post-arrival mandatory self-quarantine if the person receives a negative test result prior to arrival. Allows DOH to establish conditions for exemption. Requires certain COVID-19 tests for travelers who do not have a test result upon arrival to avoid mandatory self-quarantine. Requires any person who receives a positive test for COVID-19 post-arrival to be responsible for all costs associated with that person's mandatory self-quarantine. Repeals on 12/31/2021

The Hawaii Emergency Management Agency (HI-EMA) **offers comments on** House Bill 1286.

While HI-EMA understands the challenges of the COVID-19 emergency, HI-EMA feels that this measure may not be necessary as the various counties already have a clear sense of how they wish to handle quarantines and testing requirements for travelers. This has also been addressed in the State emergency proclamations for this incident. As the incident evolves, similar discussions on vaccinations will be needed.

Thank you.

Luke P. Meyers: Luke.P.Meyers@hawaii.gov; 808-733-4300T

HB-1286

Submitted on: 2/8/2021 7:53:16 AM

Testimony for PDP on 2/9/2021 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Marion Paul	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

I oppose **HB 1286**. Scientific data shows that 2 tests are significantly more effective than one. Each island's Mayor should have the ability to handle the safety of each island, given the current health circumstances. One size does not fit all. Mahalo.

HB-1286

Submitted on: 2/8/2021 7:54:15 AM

Testimony for PDP on 2/9/2021 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
chelsea Boyer	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I am a single mother here on the island of Kauai who has a profession in the vacation rental industry. No matter your opinion on tourism in Hawaii it's evident that our island thrives on this industry. I have been collecting unemployment now since May. Yes, for a time it was ok because of the extra \$600 I was breaking even but as soon as that went away I was making less than half of my usual paycheck but still had all the same bills. I don't WANT to be on unemployment. I WANT to work! I love my job! First people can't quarantine in our rentals, then they can come with negative test, then they can't, now they can if they spend another \$2k+ staying in a bubble resort (which makes no sense to me...exposing resident workers to these bubble resort guests) and THEN they can stay with us. You are killing your residents. You are killing our economy. Those of us who have jobs in the VR industry...my cleaners, my handymen, ME...we don't want to mooch off of the government's pennies that they are giving us. We want to work. We aren't all blessed to have jobs like construction or county or other trades that haven't been affected by the pandemic. And, not all of us WANT jobs like that. Please, open up the island. Allow us to work, to our food on the table, to be able to afford gymnastics, etc again, to allow us to thrive. Focus on keeping your community informed on how the virus spreads and get us all the vaccine. Thanks for taking the time to read my testimony. I love Kauai.

HB-1286

Submitted on: 2/8/2021 7:56:48 AM

Testimony for PDP on 2/9/2021 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Cynthia Welti	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

Kauai has stayed safe because of restricting travel. Fortunately vaccinations are coming. This is not the time to open up, because we have seen travel brings the virus.

There is a reason we manage health at the state and county level, like we do for invasive diseases in plants, to contain outbreaks.

Please vote no on this bill.

HB-1286

Submitted on: 2/8/2021 7:57:09 AM

Testimony for PDP on 2/9/2021 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Richard Stillman	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

I am an over 60 year old taxpayer and full time resident of the county of Kaua'i and state of Hawaii. I have lived here in that capacity since 2003. I strongly oppose HB1286 on the grounds that it removes the ability for our most locally elected official (county Mayor) to make decisions affecting the health and well being of our citizens during the pandemic.

It's obvious that the decisions our Mayor has made since the pandemic began has saved lives. The so called Safe Travels Program is not safe. One test 72 hours before travel and you're free to go is not supported by the CDC for international travel where the rate of infection is lower than it is in the United States.

It's clear to me that a combination of tourism industry and elected official's interests and egos are the motivation behind this bill. It's also obvious that this bill is aimed directly at Kaua'i for having a mayor who is doing what's right for the residents.

I respectfully ask that you vote "NO" on this bill so that while we wait for solutions like mask wearing, social distancing, small gatherings and the rollout of the vaccine have more time to work to prevent the spread of disease. Any traveler who wants to safely visit Kaua'i is not confused by the difference in the rules of how to get here, etc. We still have many who are in quarantine waiting to be released and as a result our infection rate and numbers lead the state. Everyone I speak with wants to keep it that way for now until the science says there's another way.

I feel safer knowing that our disease rate is low here. You must not know what that's like or else you wouldn't want to jeopardize it.

Please vote "NO".

Thank you,

Richard Stillman

HB-1286

Submitted on: 2/8/2021 7:58:37 AM

Testimony for PDP on 2/9/2021 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Bruce Conrad Welti	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

To Whom It May Concern:

I oppose HB1286. Kauai has very few Covid cases, and those we have, and have had, have been almost exclusively tied to travel. Our people's health and lives have been saved, thanks to aggressive containment measures. It's good to keep many of these decisions at the county level. A vaccine has arrived and is being rolled out. Give us time, keep us safe. We will re-open soon enough. Thank you.

Bruce Conrad Welti



The House of Representatives
The Thirty-First Legislature
Regular Session of 2021

To: Committee on Pandemic & Disaster Preparedness
Committee on Labor & Tourism

Date: February 9, 2021

Place: Conference Room 309 - Via Video Conference
Hawaii State Capitol
415 South Beretania Street
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

RE: HB 1286 Relating to Travel

Rep. Linda Ichiyama, Chair & Rep. Stacelynn D.M. Eli, Vice Chair and the Representatives of the Committee On Pandemic & Disaster Preparedness
Rep. Richard H.K. Onishi, Chair, Rep. Jackson D. Sayama, Vice Chair and the Representatives of the Committee on Labor and Tourism.

Rental By Owners Awareness Association (RBOAA) fully supports compliance with State taxation laws and County zoning regulations.

RBOAA **supports** this HB 1286 and would like to offer the offer the following:

There has been confusion on the travel requirements and this bill will offer continuity and it will provide a clear framework for travel to the State of Hawaii

We suggest that language be added to include those who have received the COVID-19 vaccine. Allowing travelers to avoid certain restrictions and offering clearance to travel without being tested for COVID-19 first.

This Bill may also start Hawaii on the pathway to economic recovery and return of tourism employment.

Sincerely,

Alicia Humiston, President
Rentals by Owner Awareness Association

HB-1286

Submitted on: 2/8/2021 8:17:51 AM

Testimony for PDP on 2/9/2021 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Delaney de la Barra	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

Re: Testimony regarding HB 1286 (Against)
Statewide Safe Travels Program

Aloha Honorable Representatives:

I am writing from the island of Maui against this proposed bill.

This bill would strip mayors of their ability to protect their counties. Here are the reasons why I am against it:

1. All of the Hawaiian Islands are not in the same situation and therefore should not be treated the same. We have different resources—some islands do not have hospitals, while Maui has one. The one hospital that we do have has been of major concern to residents, as it has been the cause of several clusters here and has been completely full at times.
2. Maui has suffered terribly since mid-October, with cases rising steadily. Our dramatically rising numbers were ignored because the overall state numbers did not increase and news is very much Honolulu-centric. Our Mayor made a promise when he agreed not to opt out of the Safe Travels Plan that he would reinstate quarantine once cases rose to 4.99 per 100,000 (so 7.5 for Maui island). Once the numbers increased past that, he said that he had decided not to use the tier system (in other words, he reneged on his promise to his constituents). The target for re-instating quarantine kept moving as we reached higher numbers, and now he says that he won't do much unless the one hospital we have is overrun. At least we have that option. In this plan, even if the hospital is overrun, there would be no option of opting out of the Safe Travels Plan. Note that KITV reported on 2/1/21 that the hospital was indeed full, although I think that is no longer the case.
3. Mayor Kawakami has been the best leader by far in the way he has handled this situation. He is the best advocate who cares about the residents of his island. He is my hero, and the majority of Maui residents wish that he was our mayor. This bill would strip him of his ability to protect Kauai, and is probably targeted specifically at him.
4. The bill calls to allow people to arrive here first and then test. This strategy was tried on all islands and failed. Maui had trailers to care for these people and contracted with a resort hotel here to take these people in. The bill calls for people to be responsible for their own quarantine costs, but that's not the way it works. When the visitor has a

reservation at an Air B&B, they cannot go there if they test positive, so we become responsible to handle their lodging. Hotels will often not accept people they know are positive, and we become responsible for their lodging. The point of bringing visitors in for the profit is completely dashed, as now we are responsible to pay for their expenses.

5. A fifth reason that I oppose this measure is that not all the islands are being treated the same as far as vaccines. State leadership apparently decided on an 11% allotment for Maui, which did not cover our needs in any way, probably due to the high number of part-time residents, or snowbirds, we have. There were other issues such as the use of VAMS where tourists could and did sign up for the vaccine here. The online request system was very difficult and many seniors were not able to manage it, however for others it was very easy to lie and many who got the vaccine should not have been eligible. The state is planning to finish tier 1b by the end of February, and we have no idea whether we will be back open for vaccines by then. What we do know is that we will be nowhere close to finishing up 1b along with the rest of the state. In other words, Maui will be even less protected than the rest of the state.

6. LG Green is proposing to waive tests for travelers who are vaccinated, believing that the vaccine causes sterilization immunity. The research is still being done on this, and opening up based on unproven research is not a good idea and endangers us unnecessarily.

7. Lastly, Maui's tourism numbers are much higher per capita. We have about 11% of the population but at least 36% of the tourists. Making decisions about travelers affects Maui much more than O'ahu, which we have seen with the Safe Travel Plan since mid-October.

Please vote against this bill. Think about the impact on the neighbor islands, which are part of the state. One size does not fit all!

COUNTY COUNCIL

Arryl Kaneshiro, Chair
Mason K. Chock, Vice Chair
Bernard P. Carvalho, Jr.
Felicia Cowden
Bill DeCosta
Luke A. Evslin
KipuKai Kualii



OFFICE OF THE COUNTY CLERK

Jade K. Fountain-Tanigawa, County Clerk
Scott K. Sato, Deputy County Clerk

Telephone: (808) 241-4188
Facsimile: (808) 241-6349
E-mail: cokcouncil@kauai.gov

Council Services Division
4396 Rice Street, Suite 209
Lihu'e, Kaua'i, Hawai'i 96766

February 8, 2021

**TESTIMONY OF FELICIA COWDEN,
COUNCILMEMBER, KAUAI COUNTY COUNCIL
ON
HB 1286, RELATING TO TRAVEL
House Committee on Pandemic & Disaster Preparedness
House Committee on Labor & Tourism
Tuesday, February 9, 2021
8:30 a.m.
Via Videoconference
Conference Room 309**

Dear Chair Ichiyama, Chair Onishi, and Members of the Committees:

Thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony in opposition to HB 1286, Relating to Travel. My testimony is submitted in my individual capacity as a Member of the Kaua'i County Council.

As an Individual Kaua'i County Councilmember, I OPPOSE HB 1286, Relating to (COVID-19 Quarantines) Travel. This Bill is intended to remove Kaua'i's strategy of unique quarantine requirements from the rest of the State of Hawai'i through preemption.

State policy should set the minimum health standards while allowing the counties the flexibility to set the appropriate, stronger safety thresholds above that to reflect the unique capacity and needs of the individual islands even within a county. Hawai'i Tourism Authority's January 2021 quantitative data reflects Kaua'i visitor occupancy rates within one to two percentage points from the other counties, yet our opting out of the Safe Travels program, after roughly six (6) weeks of inclusion, has returned our quality of life from fear back to calm. Kaua'i's COVID-19 safety levels are the envy of the world, and it is attracting more cautious and longer-term guests, even new residents. This Bill will again place Kaua'i needlessly at risk when our health care system, pre-COVID-19, has shifted routine moderate care to require a trip to O'ahu. We do not have the capacity to manage the potential impacts of a surge in cases.

Chair Ichiyama, Chair Onishi, and Members of the Committees
Testimony in Opposition to HB 1286
February 8, 2021
Page 2

The economic depression caused by restricted travel and movement is a national and global problem. The resort industry is suffering despite our required “3-day bubble”. Kaua‘i’s small business loss has been sad and profound. It is settling into a level that now mostly supports our residential community, which is largely operating in emotional safety from the virus. Re-exposing Kaua‘i to the alarm of increasing viral load will likely hurt us, not help us, economically.

Greater policy flexibility at the county level would enable the individual islands to create pathways to safely assist necessary resident travel, as well as contain our COVID-19 health threats. HB 1286 will create more problems for Kaua‘i than it will solve. It is the opposite of what is needed for managing the economic and health layers of this pandemic crisis.

Thank you again for this opportunity to provide testimony. Should you have any questions, please feel free to contact me or Council Services Staff at (808) 241-4188 or via E-mail to cokcouncil@kauai.gov.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Felicia Cowden". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

FELICIA COWDEN
Councilmember, Kaua‘i County Council

HB-1286

Submitted on: 2/8/2021 8:29:31 AM

Testimony for PDP on 2/9/2021 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Stephen Hanley	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha,

Mahalo for your consideration. Please support HB1286. I live on Kauai and the economic harm done to our island is widespread and very sad to see. I studied science at the M.I.T. in the 1980's, before science was politicized.

There are outstanding examples of countries and states who have managed the pandemic by following the 2019 WHO guidelines. For example, the country of Sweden - no lockdowns, no masks, no social distancing. Kids never stopped going to school - 1 child hospitalized and released - there are 1.3 million kids in the schools. Sweden is surrounded by countries that took the bait of false science. It is very sad.

There is ZERO science behind mask wearing.

Please open up our island!

Aloha,

Steve

Testimony on H.B. 1286 “RELATING TO TRAVEL”

Lee Altenberg, Ph.D.

Graduate Faculty of Ecology, Evolution, and Conservation Biology

Adj Full Professor of Mathematics

Adj Full Professor of Information and Computer Sciences

University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa

Member of the Hawai‘i Applied Pandemic Modeling Work Group

Member, Models of Infectious Disease Agent Study (MIDAS Network)

Member, Hawai‘i COVID-19 Healthcare Provider Taskforce

TESTIFYING AS AN INDIVIDUAL

February 8, 2021

Whatever merit HB 1286 may have had at its inception has been destroyed by the arrival of the highly contagious variants of the coronavirus SARS-CoV-2 in Hawai‘i. HB 1286 would legislatively mandate for all the Hawaiian islands the “Safe Travels” policy that has caused the invasion into Hawai‘i of the highly contagious UK variant B.1.1.7, as well as the spreading California variant of unknown contagiousness.

In the 31 days since the first story about HB 1286¹, the frequency of the B.1.1.7 variant has grown 8-fold on the United States mainland.

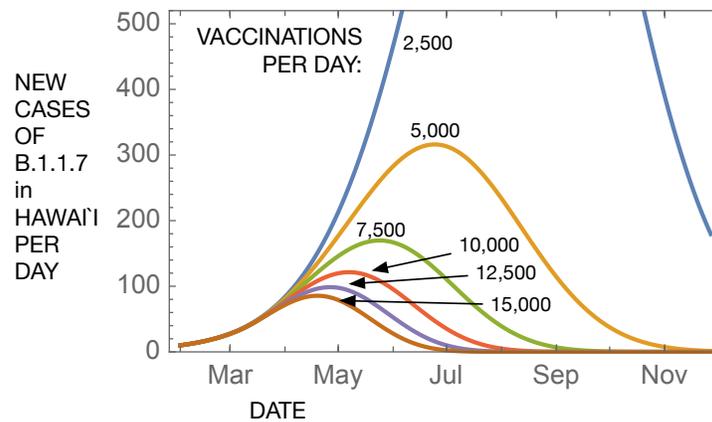
Hawai‘i has exactly one last chance to rid itself of B.1.1.7 and avoid the epidemic that would result: a 14-day stay-at-home order for the state beginning no later than February 10, when cases caught during Super Bowl Sunday parties begin to be contagious.

¹Star Advertiser Jan. 1, 2021

Here is what European experts at the epicenter of the B.1.1.7 variant are calling for: "Reduce travel within and across national borders, and require tests and quarantine for cross-border travellers; tests should be required 24 h before travel and 7–10 days after travel; quarantine anyone arriving from countries with high local COVID-19 transmission or suspicious variants." ²

This policy is consistent with the CDC recommendations for international travel.

A model for the number of B.1.1.7 infections in Hawai'i as a function of the number of vaccinations per day can be derived from the models in Galloway et al. (2021) and Washington et al. (2021).



Assumptions:

1. 1 infection of B.1.1.7 in Hawai'i on Feb. 1
2. B.1.1.7 cases increase 70
3. Vaccination (2 doses) reduces transmission by 95%
4. 75,000 out of 1,416,000 residents were fully vaccinated as of Feb. 1, 2021
5. 25,943 already infected as of Feb. 1

²[https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lancet/article/PIIS0140-6736\(21\)00150-1/fulltext](https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lancet/article/PIIS0140-6736(21)00150-1/fulltext)

References

- Galloway, S. E., Paul, P., MacCannell, D. R., Johansson, M. A., Brooks, J. T., MacNeil, A., Slayton, R. B., Tong, S., Silk, B. J., Armstrong, G. L., Biggerstaff, M., and Dugan, V. G. 2021. Emergence of SARS-CoV-2 B.1.1.7 lineage — United States, December 29, 2020–January 12, 2021. *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report*, 70:95–99.
- Washington, N. L., Gangavarapu, K., Zeller, M., Bolze, A., Cirulli, E. T., Barrett, K. M. S. B., Larsen, B. B., Anderson, C., White, S., Cassens, T., Jacobs, S., Levan, G., Nguyen, J., III, J. M. R., Rivera-Garcia, C., Sandoval, E., Wang, X., Wong, D., Spencer, E., Robles-Sikisaka, R., Kurzban, E., Hughes, L. D., Deng, X., Wang, C., Servellita, V., Valentine, H., Hoff, P. D., Seaver, P., Sathe, S., Gietzen, K., Sickler, B., Antico, J., Hoon, K., Liu, J., Harding, A., Bakhtar, O., Basler, T., Austin, B., Isaksson, M., Febbo, P., Becker, D., Laurent, M., McDonald, E., Yeo, G. W., Knight, R., Laurent, L. C., de Feo, E., Worobey, M., Chiu, C., Suchard, M. A., Lu, J. T., Lee, W., and Andersen, K. G. 2021. Genomic epidemiology identifies emergence and rapid transmission of SARS-CoV-2 B.1.1.7 in the United States. *medRxiv*.

LATE

HB-1286

Submitted on: 2/8/2021 8:39:43 AM

Testimony for PDP on 2/9/2021 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Kapono Chong-Hanssen	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

One need only look at the vastly different epidemic curves from each county to appreciate the impact of allowing counties to opt-out of the dangerous “Safe Travels” program and develop their own additional safety protocols. The State of Hawaii has thus far proven it is either unwilling or unable to coordinate a travel testing program effective enough to prevent the January 2021 surges that particularly plagued the two counties who failed to implement any additional travel safety measures, Maui and Honolulu. Having wisely opted out of the rising curve of COVID-19 cases on December 2, 2020, Kaua`i county saw it’s cases gradually decline again while Maui continued to climb the curve until finally plateauing around mid January. Comparing the two counties trends over the following 6 weeks, it could be reasonably surmised that this decision by Mayor Kawakami prevented approximately 5 deaths on Kauai. Additionally, Kauai has remained in tier 4, allowing non-tourism dependent businesses and residents to enjoy much more freedom and local economic activity than the tier 2 restrictions the viral spread necessitated for Oahu residents. Not to mention, the hotel occupancy of Kauai the week of January 17-23, 2021 at 19.7% was still similar to Maui at 20.1% and O’ahu at 21.7% even with our added safety measures which continue be spun only as an economic chokehold to the tourism industry by some state leaders.

Having this basis of knowledge, the timing of the Star Advertiser’s story about Representative Saiki’s bill on January 7th, 2021, the same day they reported the highest total of COVID19 cases (322) since the surge we saw in August 2020, could not have been worse. Of course, the many of us on Kaua`i who have put considerable time and effort into guarding public safety while attempting to support our local economy, regarded this proposal with disdain. The rationale given behind this bill to “reduce confusion for both residents and tourists” is nowhere near an adequate justification. Of note, this same article also mentioned Rep. Saiki’s desire to reduce the penalty for violating the public mask wearing mandate, which is one of the preventive measures relied upon and emphasized most heavily to residents by the lead of the “Safe Travels” program, Lieutenant Governor Green.

The continued efforts to ignore scientific data, CDC recommendations, and proven travel safety measures from other island locations, many also economically tied to tourism, in favor of catering to visitors and the tourism industry is becoming more blatant and obvious to Hawaii residents. It is no surprise that a recent survey of Hawaii

residents showed 67% of Hawaii residents agreed with the statement that the “island is being run for tourists at the expense of local people.” This resentment felt by the majority of Hawaii residents can only be amplified by this bill’s attempt to force compliance with the state's current, surge prone, unsafe travel plan before adequate protections for our residents such as mass vaccinations approaching her immunity levels and better testing protocols have been implemented. It is worthwhile to mention that Kauai county has thus far been relatively successful in it's vaccine rollout partly because the majority of our public health resources can be devoted to vaccination rather than contact tracing and triage of critical care patients due to our low number of COVID19 cases.

The ability to respond to the pandemic locally and aggressively has been the key to success in other countries like New Zealand and Australia where cities where immediately shut down as soon as certain case clusters occurred, while the rest of the country’s economy was left to function as usual. To take steps in the opposite direction at this time by moving farther away from science based testing requirements and forcing statewide compliance with an inadequate travel safety policy in the face of the recently confirmed introduction of the highly transmissible B.1.1.7 (UK) variant is a mistake following a disturbing trend of placing the tourism economy before the safety of our residents.

ʻo au iho no me ka ha`aha`a,

D. Kaponon Chong-Hanssen, MD

LATE

HB-1286

Submitted on: 2/8/2021 8:56:57 AM

Testimony for PDP on 2/9/2021 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Raymond DeCastro III	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

Aloha everyone,

I strongly oppose hb1286.

Every island's demographic is different. On Kauai, we have a community that has been surviving under the leadership of Mayor Kawakami. We've come this far and we are getting vaccinated. Why ruin our efforts and sacrifices we've made up until now by subjecting us to the new proposal? Why not just wait till we're all vaccinated? It's due to his efforts that we aren't under a stringent lock-down. We have the luxuries that other places do not because we are practically COVID free. Those businesses that are affected by Mayor Kawakami's quarantine regulations I feel very sad for, but a good side note is the stimulus bill has helped them and the new proposals will too. In the end we are just buying time till we can all get vaccinated.

Please don't let our sacrifices be for nothing. Please help us buy a little more time.

Thank you,

Raymond DeCastro III

8. February 2021
The Honorable Members of the House of Representatives
Hawaii State Capitol
Honolulu, Oahu, Hawaii 96813

MEETING IN HONOLULU on February 8, 2021: House Bill 1286, Relating to Travel

TESTIMONY IN OPPOSITION TO THE PROPOSED Statewide Safe Travels Program
Exemption; COVID-19; Quarantine

Aloha,

I have been a resident of Hawaii for almost sixty years. I am proud to have been a resident of the island of Kauai for almost fifty years. I have closely observed the relative success with which Kauai has avoided the pandemic, while other – perhaps less careful – islands have been overwhelmed.

Our relative success is due, in large part, to the strong and timely decisions made by our mayor, appropriate to the island and protecting our small community. I believe that it would be a mistake to compromise the “shield” we now have protecting the community.

I therefore submit that it is highly unjustified for the State to prevent Mayor Kawakami from protecting the residents of Kaua‘i,

Thank you for this opportunity to testify on this important matter.

Very truly yours,



LATE

HB-1286

Submitted on: 2/8/2021 9:36:42 AM

Testimony for PDP on 2/9/2021 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Stephen Taylor	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Good day,

As an owner of two vacation units in Kihei, Maui I support this legislation and request you consider adding that if a person has been fully vaccinated they can avoid quarantine as well.

Thank you,

Stephen Taylor

I'm sure even Kawakami regrets the "lynch mob" mentality he has fomented against tourists from his false narratives about tourism, but he can't stop now or he'll alienate his constituency. The state needs to bring some sanity to the pandemic rules, make them consistent, despite the social media backlash that is inevitable from Kaua'i's highly vocal misguided anti-haole constituency.

Rather than blaming the county's lack of infrastructure upkeep or the growing local population that constitutes 80% of the traffic (outside the pandemic, tourists only comprise an average of 20% of the vehicles on Kaua'i roads), he blames tourists.

He slaps added taxes on multimillion dollar seasonal homes, saying that will force owners to rent their property as long term low income housing (where the owners will never be able to stay) and keep them from using their property as TVRs (when the owners aren't enjoying their property)!

Like Trump leveraging the pandemic to bolster his anti-immigrant agenda, Kawakami uses "bubble resorts" to prototype his 1-stop resorts where tourists never leave the resort. As was recently quoted in the Washington Post "You're stuck for three days on the property... [a bubble resort]... defeats the purpose of going to this incredibly pristine island where nature takes center stage."

There have been 1400 "bubbles", which Kawakami treats as a victory, but that's an average of 4 guests per night at the bubble resorts, not sufficient to maintain any hotel revenue.

Worse, there have been no post-arrival positive tests at the bubble resorts, showing how ludicrous this idea has been: wasting tourists time, forcing them into an unappealing option, where the states pre-test would have been sufficient!

Either as a purported means to control the pandemic spread or as a prototype for a future of keeping tourists separate from locals, Kawakami's one-stop/bubble resort idea has been a complete failure. It's time to cut his losses for him, as he won't ever admit his failure, even though I'm sure he regrets the damage he's caused (both to the Kaua'i economy and inciting the intense anti-tourist local sentiment).

While keeping tourists out, the restrictions on returning locals are lax. A mainland-traveling Kaua'i local isn't required to either pre- or post-test, and has full access to their entire property, no masking, no "separate bed/bath" or visitor restrictions, they hug their family and friends on arrival and during the quarantine. It's no wonder that locals have been the major cause of the pandemic spread on Kaua'i. Even though Kawakami continuously spews a false narrative that tourists bring the pandemic, in reality: tourists are the ones who follow the masking and socially distance rules, and naturally won't be hugging anybody.

Then there is the Kaua'i tier system which was crafted by an MD, where an estimated 10% of 240 new cases per month would be required to fill the island's 24 available hospital beds (with 2% of those needing intensive care beds, half the islands intensive

care capacity). so they "set the bar" of opting-out of "Safe Travels" at 35 new cases per week for two weeks running ("Tier 2"). Then, abruptly did an "about face" and preemptively closed the island while still in Tier 4! The bar was already set low, the about-face was ludicrous.

I support HB1286 and bringing statewide consistency to pandemic travel. In addition to helping restart economic recovery in Kauai, it will give Kawakami an "out" and allow him to divert blame to the state instead of having to take responsibility.

LATE

HB-1286

Submitted on: 2/8/2021 10:10:45 AM

Testimony for PDP on 2/9/2021 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Carole Patt	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

Aloha Kakou, Thank you for taking my testimony. What is the rush to push HB1286? We are beginning to make some headway against the virus with our vaccination program. But with the introduction of new forms of COVID, and the fact that only a small percentage of our residents have been vaccinated, HB1286 is the height of irresponsibility. Why is it imperative to remove our defense against COVID now? We have struggled and sacrificed too long and too hard to surrender to the virus now. What is the reason we can't wait a few more months and re-open safely?

LATE

HB-1286

Submitted on: 2/8/2021 9:50:07 AM

Testimony for PDP on 2/9/2021 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Gary Lopez	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony for HB 1286. My wife and I have been property owners on the Island of Kauai for the past 3 years. We use the property as a vacation rental and spend multiple weeks there since we purchased our unit. It saddens me to see that the State of Hawaii is allowing the islands to operate as a sovereign States and not equal to the same guidelines as each other Islands. This puts Kauai citizens, property owners and visiting guests at a disadvantage to the other islands. Our property usually has a 90% occupancy rate but this pasy year has been dismal compared to past years. It seems that Mayor Kawakami has been allowed to make independent decisions from the other islands. This too means less income to the County of Kauai and the State of Hawaii as well. We understand the need for safety and precautions but Hawaii should be speaking as one voice. We have had guests very confused on the additional restrictions in Kauai. Lately after we explain them to the guests, they all have cancelled and many have booked on other islands. There needs to be a level playing field for vacation properties, business and excursion operators. Many of our island friends who are unemployed know that relief and non mortgage payments and rent will be coming due at some point. If Kauai does not have the same opportunites to attract business as the other islands, it will lead to an even more depressed state for the island than now. Please pass HB 1286 to have a balanced and fair approach to reopeing Hawaii to outside travel.

LATE

HB-1286

Submitted on: 2/8/2021 10:20:43 AM

Testimony for PDP on 2/9/2021 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Kathleen Ochsenbein	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Please support this bill. We need to use a vaccine card as an alternative to testing.

LATE

HB-1286

Submitted on: 2/8/2021 10:20:34 AM

Testimony for PDP on 2/9/2021 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Christopher Johnson	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

HB1286 is a no-brainer to safely ease the economic devastation Hawaii has experienced over the last year. In addition, I would urge the legislature to include language to allow travellers with proof of vaccination to be exempt from quarantine restrictions.

Respectfully,

Christopher Johnson

LATE

HB-1286

Submitted on: 2/8/2021 10:59:58 AM

Testimony for PDP on 2/9/2021 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Tonic Bille	BBTVU Association of Oahu	Support	No

Comments:

We support HB 1286 it makes sense. Mahalo

LATE

HB-1286

Submitted on: 2/8/2021 11:05:09 AM

Testimony for PDP on 2/9/2021 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Barda Cameron	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

We support the island where our condo is (Kauai) and want the island to flourish with its tourist business, but don't think its fair that all the islands should have different rules. After all, Hawaii is one state and all counties should abide by the rules of the state. Other states are in accordance with that notion. Why should Hawaii be different? With different travel rules for each county, tourists are being forced to get around the travel rules by flying into another island with less stringent rules and then flying on to Kauai. This will not solve spreading the virus in our opinion. We would like to see all the Hawaiian islands go by the same travel rules. Hawaii needs tourists as tourism is the main income source and source of survival for the Hawaiian people. Therefore, we support bill HB1286.

Doug and Barda Cameron

Owner of a condo at Waipouli Beach Resort, Kapaa, Kauai

LATE

HB-1286

Submitted on: 2/8/2021 11:07:35 AM

Testimony for PDP on 2/9/2021 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
jon	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Thank you for accepting my testimony.

I own a vacation rental home on Kauai. We have seen very little interest in booking a vacation on Kauai, since the visitation policy changes every two months and visitors do not know what is going to happen when they want to visit and have a vacation. This uncertainty and complicated entry protocol has driven potential guests to cancel a visit to Kauai and is hurting small businesses that rely on tourist dollars. People on Kauai are struggling to keep businesses open and with no clear future policy by the local government, tourism will remain at a very low level, as vacationers are more than willing to book a vacation on another island with fewer confusing protocols to figure out. . Getting all the islands on the same visitor protocol is an excellent goal. Post arrival testing 3-4 after arrival is very doable.. Testing sites should be easy to get to and set up outdoors in vacation resort areas like Poipu and Kapaa. Pre flight testing is working and should continue and mandatory mask wearing in public is still very smart protocol.

We have to make tourism easier to consider for travelers as we must get the Hawaiian economy going again. Every aspect pf tourism is dragging because the visitation policies are confusing and scaring people from coming. Vaccinated people should be able to enter the islands and still follow local mask wearing protocols to support all others also wearing masks. If we do not start welcoming tourism back, with a uniform policy to follow, many people will suffer in their local businesses and some larger hotel businesses will also have to close up permanently.

Thank you for introducing this bill helping tourism make it's way back to Hawaii and it's economy. We are making progress in this pandemic and this will help us take another important step. Mahalo, Jon Schutz

LATE

HB-1286

Submitted on: 2/8/2021 11:17:11 AM

Testimony for PDP on 2/9/2021 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Tom and Margaret Fuller	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Mr. Chair and members of the committee.

For the record, our names are Tom and Margaret Fuller and we own property at 1901 Poipu Road in Koloa, Kauai.

IWe speak in support of HB1286. We are seeking a return to **consistency** and **accountability** of the laws of Hawaii.

We own a vacation rental on Kauai. Without visitors we will eventually go bankrupt. Mayor Kawakami's decision to opt out of the Safe Travels program, despite evidence that travelers in the program are NOT spreading the CoronaVirus - has hurt us economically, while the rest of Hawaii can begin to resume tourist travel. Lt. Governor Green [stated](#) that "Our surveillance study showed that the rate of COVID for our returning residents was about five times higher than for general travelers who got the test".

Article V Section 5 of the Hawaii constitution says that "The governor shall be responsible for the faithful execution of the laws." The creation of those laws rests in the Hawaii Legislature, not the governor or county mayors.

Yet the governor has essentially created his own set of laws and powers granted to county governors as it relates to COVID-19.

We want everyone to be safe. We support reasonable methods to ensure that safety such as masks, vaccines, social distancing and tests. What we don't support is an executive with unbridled powers

Please pass HB 1286 and return the power of legislation to its rightful place - in the House and Senate. You should be responsible and accountable for creating the law.

We also need consistency across the islands. Confusion among visitors reigns with mayors who can govern any way they seem fit - flying in the face of the Legislative Branch. Many have told us they will not come to Kauai because of the current opt-out and because of the ever-changing rules.

We love Hawaii. We have travelled to Kauai for well over a quarter of a century. We bought property and hope one day soon to make the island our home. All we want is consistency and accountability in governing of this part of the United States.

Thank you.

Tom and Margaret Fuller

LATE

HB-1286

Submitted on: 2/8/2021 11:32:03 AM

Testimony for PDP on 2/9/2021 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Kim Markham	Individual	Comments	No

Comments:

My husband and I are senior citizens with high risk factors. I object to any portion of the bill that requires all islands or counties to have identical travel rules. My island Molokai is extremely vulnerable to contagious disease because we have a high poverty rate which means multiple generations living in close quarters; higher percentage of Hawaiian population with comorbidity factors like diabetes, hypertension and obesity; large percentage of elderly with very limited medical facilities on island. Therefore our community may need to enact stronger rules than other communities. Protect our kupuna. Protect our children. Protect our essential workers. They are more valuable than any tourist dollars.

LATE

HB-1286

Submitted on: 2/8/2021 11:33:58 AM

Testimony for PDP on 2/9/2021 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
David Vandervoet	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

My name is David Vandervoet and I live in Southern California but own a house in Hanalei. I have cancelled my last four scheduled visits to Kauai in 2020 and 2021 because I know how serious and deadly the COVID virus is and I don't want to inadvertently bring it to Kauai. I know that having a pre-travel test 72 hours before arriving on Kauai is not adequate to insure that I do not bring COVID to Kauai. Four people who I worked with have died from COVID. That is four times more than all of the people in total who have died from COVID on Kauai. The man who lives across the street from me has had COVID for 17 days. He says he has never felt so sick, and is 63 years old and had no pre-existing conditions. He can't work and just lies in bed all day in extreme pain from coughing. Two friends who had COVID and recovered still have long term lung and kidney issues 4 months after testing COVID-free. Six older people in an assisted living facility 3 miles from our house died last June and July from COVID. The ICU beds at our local Long Beach hospital are full and new patients are being sent to a hospital 90 miles away.

Because I know first-hand the reality of COVID, how easily it spreads and how deadly it can be, I fully support Mayor Kawakami's efforts to prevent COVID from getting started in any meaningful way on Kauai. Please hold Bill 1286 in committee for now.

LATE

HB-1286

Submitted on: 2/8/2021 11:41:08 AM

Testimony for PDP on 2/9/2021 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Joanne Allen	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I am writing in support of HB1286. I support all the measures in this bill and would like the travel program to be expanded to allow no testing or quarantine required for those who are vaccinated.

Thank you,

J Allen



HAWAII LODGING & TOURISM
ASSOCIATION

Testimony of
Mufi Hannemann
President & CEO
Hawai'i Lodging & Tourism Association

Committee Pandemic & Disaster Preparedness
Committee on Labor & Tourism

House Bill 1286: Relating to Statewide Safe Travels Program Exemption; COVID-19; Quarantine

Chair Ichiyama, Chair Onishi, and members of the Committees, mahalo for the opportunity to submit testimony on behalf of the Hawai'i Lodging & Tourism Association, the state's largest private sector visitor industry organization.

The Hawai'i Lodging & Tourism Association—nearly 700 members strong, representing more than 50,000 hotel rooms and nearly 40,000 lodging workers—has long advocated for the adoption of statewide travel rules as they pertain to the COVID-19 pandemic and the Safe Travels program. While we recognize the importance of “home rule” and allowing the county mayors to decide what is best for their communities, the lack of cohesion in rules for travelers and returning residents to Hawai'i has led to significant confusion, further harming an industry already suffering an unprecedented economic downturn. As such, HLTA strongly supports House Bill 1286.

A recent special study issued by the Hawai'i Tourism Authority indicated that the single most prevalent reason that stopped travelers from visiting Hawai'i was that testing requirements were unreasonable. Moreover, the same study indicated that 21% of respondents had trouble sourcing a COVID-19 test from a Trusted Partner and 46% felt that the 72-hour window was troublesome. What was once perception has now become reality. The Washington Post recently ran an article titled “Hawaii wants tourists. Tourists want Hawaii. But the rules are complicated,” which highlighted that our convoluted rules are serving as a deterrent to prospective visitors who are finding themselves navigating confusing requirements for both travel to the state and within the counties. HLTA has been a strong proponent of a clear, statewide policy that provides clarity and simplicity for healthy travelers to come to Hawai'i. We have also been urging our local government to provide travelers with the option to take a second, rapid COVID-19 test upon arrival should they not receive their pre-arrival test result in time. The State has the tests and facilities needed to make this possible, and we also know that two counties are already providing rapid tests to travelers and have the facilities and know-how to execute this.

For these reasons, HLTA strongly supports House Bill 1286.

Thank you for the opportunity to offer this testimony.

LATE

HB-1286

Submitted on: 2/8/2021 1:03:53 PM

Testimony for PDP on 2/9/2021 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Ruby Pap	Individual	Comments	No

Comments:

Aloha-

I have some serious concerns about HB 1286. How will it affect the Counties' ability to set rules that are best for their islands? I am from Kaua`i, and we have done very well with our own rules. Our Covid cases are down to practically nothing and people are still getting by. The Mayor's resort bubble program, with a pre and post test is really taking off! I would hate to jeopardize the success and health of our island with a bill that does not allow for flexibility at the local level. This is about our health and safety! The Covid test is simply not accurate enough to rely on just one test. 30% of these tests are false negative, which means positive cases will come in undetected and contribute to community spread. On Kauai, we have had very little community spread and we would like to keep it that way!

Thank you, -Ruby Pap

5121 Rice St., Apt. 2501, Lihue, HI 96766

LATE

HB-1286

Submitted on: 2/8/2021 1:25:48 PM

Testimony for PDP on 2/9/2021 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Sandra Herndon	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

Please oppose HB1286. Our island, Kaua`i, consistently has the least amount of COVID cases of all the neighbor islands. This is due to the excellent strategies of our Mayor and Council to prevent the spread, among residents and travelers. Do NOT bring this plague to our doorstep by eliminating our ability to set our our rules. Mahalo.

LATE

HB-1286

Submitted on: 2/8/2021 1:26:34 PM

Testimony for PDP on 2/9/2021 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Lorraine Mull	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

I would like to voice my STRONG opposition to Bill 1286. Kauai has remained the safest of the major islands due to the strong leadership of our Mayor. We would like to keep it that way. I urge you not to pass this legislation.

Mahalo and aloha,

Lorraine Mull

LATE

HB-1286

Submitted on: 2/8/2021 1:37:02 PM

Testimony for PDP on 2/9/2021 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Chad Taniguchi	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

Aloha Chair Ichiyama, Chair Onishi, and committee members,

Kaua'i has the healthiest covid population in the state, and one of the best in the world. Listening to scientists, Mayor Kawakami looked to his roots and chose to prioritize health. The Council and citizens support this.

Similarly, the Phuket Tourist Association announced plans to reopen their island after 70% of their population is vaccinated - in October 2021. "The safety of the people gets priority because tourists come and go but locals live here."

Could your committees research how places like Phuket are trying to support their residents' economic survival until tourism reopens?

And how to use State/County budget/resources and State/County staff to accelerate a shift from tourism overdependence to a balanced economy, including local agriculture?

How can a significant number of hotel workers be supported in agriculture? Our future economy WILL involve less movement of people and things by airplane to Hawai'i.

Who are the visionaries in the Legislature who can see that future clearly? And can enact legislation to make it happen? We are awaiting your leadership.

LATE

HB-1286

Submitted on: 2/8/2021 1:44:47 PM

Testimony for PDP on 2/9/2021 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Joan Kutzer	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

My name is Joan Kutzer, I am a Registered Nurse living and practicing on Kauai.

I am in Strong Opposition to HB1286.

Our Neighbor islands have limited health care resources. The mayors should determine what is best for each island. On Kauai we currently see about 1 new case per day. When we did not have the quarantine, we had many more. The overwhelming majority of our cases are related to mainland travel.

Please allow our mayors to make independent decisions for the health of our communities.

LATE

HB-1286

Submitted on: 2/8/2021 1:46:31 PM

Testimony for PDP on 2/9/2021 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
pamela burrell	apollo kauai, zero waste kauai	Oppose	No

Comments:

Aloha State House members,

Here on Kauai, because our Mayor chose health over potential "wealth"..we local citizens have avoided serious illnesses and death. Our healthcare infrastructure can not afford a surge of covid here on the island. One size of covid response does not fit every island..

I am sure you are under pressure from businesses to unilaterally open but not at the expense of our local residents ..please.

Thank you for your time.

pamela burrell,

Kalihiwai kapuna

LATE

HB-1286

Submitted on: 2/8/2021 1:46:51 PM

Testimony for PDP on 2/9/2021 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Marisa Hurley	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Kauai's economy has suffered the greatest of all of the islands due to County restrictions on travel. This has resulted in thousands of lost jobs and permanently closed businesses. As the largest private employer on our small island, we are committed to re-opening as soon as the restrictions are lightened.

We are in support of a Safe Travels Program **consistent** across all islands, and specifically the position of the Hawaii Lodging & Tourism Association:

- *Increase the window during which travelers could take their pre-arrival test from three days to four or five days.*
- *Should a traveler satisfy the required pre testing of their planned departure, but not have their test results in hand when their flight is set to leave, allow them a 24 to 48-hour window to await their test results to be uploaded to the Safe Travels app before departing for Hawai'i to avoid being subject to the mandatory 10-day quarantine.*
- *Make available testing upon arrival in O'ahu (or other neighbor island) via mobile testing for passengers whose pre-arrival test results have not yet been uploaded to the Safe Travels website.*

We also support additional lightened visitor restrictions based on the vaccination roll-out.

One of our primary priorities in our re-opening strategy is to offer vaccinations to all of our associates as well as our many small business partner employees. For an island that is largely dependent on tourism, we would like to ask for **your support in considering hospitality workers in the 1C group of the COVID vaccination roll-out.**

As the largest resort on the island, we contribute significant tax revenues to the county and state. Your support on the above will aid our mission to open as quickly as possible

LATE

HB-1286

Submitted on: 2/8/2021 1:51:02 PM

Testimony for PDP on 2/9/2021 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Eden Peart	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

Oppose this! Safeguard each island community's health. Preserve democracy and home rule.

LATE

HB-1286

Submitted on: 2/8/2021 1:53:19 PM

Testimony for PDP on 2/9/2021 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Tayemi Thompson	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

I strongly oppose this measure. Please keep Kauai safe(r)!!

LATE

HB-1286

Submitted on: 2/8/2021 1:56:47 PM

Testimony for PDP on 2/9/2021 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
laurel brier	Kauai women's caucus	Oppose	No

Comments:

Why is the legislator trying to overturn Kauai's Safer, stricter travel practices that are have proven effective in protecting our community, are favored by most community members, uphold CDC guidelines and are applauded by the science and medical committeess? Kauai's economy is not being more adversely affected than other communities. You should follow our lead and protect lives. Let HB1286 die.

LATE

HB-1286

Submitted on: 2/8/2021 2:01:21 PM

Testimony for PDP on 2/9/2021 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Jeremy Burns	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

Please oppose HB1286. Counties are different and need to be able to react to their unique circumstances.

Mahalo

Jeremy Burns

LATE

HB-1286

Submitted on: 2/8/2021 2:05:06 PM

Testimony for PDP on 2/9/2021 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Myer 'Jay' Bornstein	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I support HB1286 to unify the entire state of Hawaii under one clear policy and procedure.

Also, consideration for direct entry should be considered for vaccinated individuals.

Mahalo, Jay Bornstein

LATE

HB-1286

Submitted on: 2/8/2021 2:06:42 PM

Testimony for PDP on 2/9/2021 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Barbara Levin	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

I oppose this Bill and believe individual mayors should have the right to do what is best for their island. Mayor Kawakami has kept us safe and I would like him to be able to continue to do so. Once everyone on Kaua'i who wants a vaccine has one, perhaps we can move to more standardized travel rules.

LATE

HB-1286

Submitted on: 2/8/2021 2:07:39 PM

Testimony for PDP on 2/9/2021 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Regina Floyd	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

Please OPPOSE this bill. Having lived on Kaua'i for the last 5 1/2 years, I have come to know why it is such a special place to live. I personally believe our Mayor has the best interests of his community in mind, and I believe that has been evident during this ENTIRE CV19 pandemic because Kaua'i has fared well, despite our limited resources and our small community.

I believe ALL Mayors of each County are the BEST People to make decision for the people of their island.

I appreciate the fact our state of Hawaii is attempting to streamline the process for travel to our state but I for one, LOVE the current plan that makes Kaua'i more difficult to visit. In my opinion, the decision of our Mayor has protected our people of Kaua'i.

What will the state do for Kaua'i if the passing of this bill ends up hurting the people of Kaua'i? I can imagine, nothing. Please OPPOSE this Bill and let our Mayor do his best job to protect us since he knows our community the best.

Mahalo

LATE

HB-1286

Submitted on: 2/8/2021 2:23:31 PM

Testimony for PDP on 2/9/2021 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Laura Safranski	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

Oppose. A blanket DOH approval for all islands doesn't seem appropriate because each island is unique. What works for a big city like Oahu may not be in the best interest of other counties/islands



LATE

Airlines for America®

We Connect the World

House Bill 1286 Testimony in SUPPORT

COMMITTEE ON PANDEMIC & DISASTER PREPAREDNESS

Rep. Linda Ichiyama, Chair

Rep. Stacelynn K.M. Eli, Vice Chair

COMMITTEE ON LABOR & TOURISM

Rep. Richard H.K. Onishi, Chair

Rep. Jackson D. Sayama, Vice Chair

NOTICE OF HEARING

DATE: Tuesday, February 9, 2021

TIME: 8:30 a.m.

PLACE: VIA VIDEOCONFERENCE

Conference Room 309

State Capitol

415 South Beretania Street

Chairs Ichiyama and Onishi, Vice Chairs Eli and Sayama and members of the Committees on Pandemic & Disaster Preparedness and Labor and Tourism,

Thank you for allowing us the opportunity to provide industry testimony in support of House Bill 1286 with additional comments.

Airlines for America® (A4A) is the principal trade and service organization of the U.S. airline industry.¹ A4A members have gone to extensive lengths to protect the wellbeing and safety of our employees, customers and the communities in which we live, work and serve. U.S. airlines have relied on science throughout this crisis, and have undertaken hundreds of safety measures aimed at preventing virus transmission onboard aircraft. U.S. airlines began strictly enforcing face covering requirements in April 2020, long before the federal mandate. The layers of measures implemented by carriers also include

¹ The members of the association are Alaska Airlines, Inc.; American Airlines Group, Inc.; Atlas Air, Inc.;

Delta Air Lines, Inc.; Federal Express Corporation; Hawaiian Airlines; JetBlue; Southwest Airlines Co.; United Airlines Holdings, Inc.; and United Parcel Service Co. Air Canada is an associate member.

pre-flight health acknowledgement forms, electrostatic and enhanced cleaning of aircraft and hospital-grade ventilation systems.

We are encouraged that rigorous scientific studies continue to confirm that the extensive layers of measures airlines have implemented effectively reduce the risk of transmission onboard aircraft. Studies by both the Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health's Aviation Initiative (APHI) and US TRANSCOM found that the risk of onboard transmission of COVID is very low. In fact, the research from Harvard concluded that being on an airplane as safe – if not safer than – other routine activities, such as grocery shopping or going to a restaurant. Similarly, a recent study in Canada found that travel was the smallest contributor to new COVID-19 infections and has remained extremely low throughout the crisis.

Despite these efforts, U.S. airlines have endured a barrage of constantly changing restrictions and regulations regarding travel to and from destinations across the globe. In Hawaii, the challenge has not simply been the ever-evolving requirements for travel to and around the islands, but navigating changes that vary island-to-island. This has ultimately resulted in a patchwork of requirements that are difficult to navigate both for visitors and residents alike and as such is compounding the economic toll the pandemic has had on the State.

The industry remains committed to supporting risk-based, scientific approaches to contagion mitigation. A statewide policy, such as HB1286, that does not allow for differing local standards depending on what island you are on is welcomed, and allows those traveling to and within Hawai'i the opportunity to adhere to uniform policies. This will let the private market find solutions that work; it helps the airline and travel industry partners to communicate clearly to travelers about what to expect and how to arrive travel-ready; and it helps travelers plan future travel without having to worry about last-minute policy changes.

While we are optimistic the sunset date will be the actual repeal of this measure, we recognize that this pandemic remains hard to predict. We remain hopeful the state will find a mechanism for vaccinations as a method to forgo testing in the near term. We are confident that it will continue to allow us dialogue with this body in hopes of removing some of the impediments to air travel, while ensuring Hawai'i remains safe both for residents and for visitors, who are the lifeblood of our economy.

Sincerely,



Sean Williams
VP, State & Local Government Affairs

swilliams@airlines.org

LATE

HB-1286

Submitted on: 2/8/2021 2:35:32 PM

Testimony for PDP on 2/9/2021 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Diane Brenden	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

Please oppose Bill HB1286. We want our Mayor to retain the power to regulate the safety of our island, Kauai. Mahalo

LATE

HB-1286

Submitted on: 2/8/2021 2:46:25 PM

Testimony for PDP on 2/9/2021 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
alaric arenander	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

there is no reason for the state to legislate the separate island on this issue. each island is different and there needs to be local control...thats why we have local government

this is an example of more central gaining control over kauai

mahalo

LATE

HB-1286

Submitted on: 2/8/2021 2:56:26 PM

Testimony for PDP on 2/9/2021 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Kyle Peru	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

I strongly oppose this bill. County Mayors should retain their decision making powers for which they were elected in order to act in the best interest of their County especially pertaining to decisions regarding Covid-19 and any other pandemic-related safeguards. Kauai has 9 ICU beds. That's very little. It cannot handle much while caring for its non-infected sick. Oahu has limited capacity to take on outer island cases while it's trying to take care of its own population. Mayors should follow GENERAL state guidelines but have the executive powers to act in any specific way to protect their county especially during a pandemic. We've seen how slow the state and governor is to make decisions: saving time saves lives during COVID. Mayors should retain the powers to make snap safety decisions in their respective counties' best interest.

LATE

STATUS OF HB 1286

To: House Speaker Scott Saiki, and the House Committees on Pandemic and Disaster Preparedness and the Labor and Tourism
Regarding: Hearing on February 9, 2021 of Bill 1286

Date: February 8, 2021

From: Margaret Wheeler, citizen of the County of Kauai

I am pleading with the committees that are hearing Bill 1286 to see that the process of pre-testing, travel to Kauai, in quarantine for 3 days and released into the community following a second negative Covid -19 test is really working. If Honolulu is eager to get their economy back on track, I propose that they look at what the mayor and people of Kauai are doing, because it is working. Please kill Bill 1286 in committee.

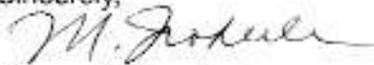
The economy will not return to full strength until we no longer are under the power of the Covid-19 virus. That is the most important thing to manage. With the two testing method, our economy has open air dining, and all essential services are open and available, with the masking and social distancing. Some days we have no new cases. Some days one or two. We have maintained Tier 4 level for many weeks.

Our hospitals are small. We must protect from the Covid-19 virus. We know the science tells us that a test upon exposure may not indicate the true result. It must be followed by a second test.

Our visitors are not confused. They know to get a test prior to arrival, and then stay in a resort bubble for three days until they have their follow up negative test. They also know that if they do not want to test, that they will quarantine for 10 days. These rules apply to visitors and residents alike. It is not confusing. Because our mayor is not confused, we are not confused.

Please be sure this Bill 1286 does not move out of committee. Thank you for your service.

Sincerely,



Margaret Wheeler.

LATE

HB-1286

Submitted on: 2/8/2021 3:18:19 PM

Testimony for PDP on 2/9/2021 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Valerie J Ventura	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

Each county of our State is unique and the decisions for pandemic related travel restrictions should remain the decision of the Mayor of each county.

Thank-you for the opportunity to submit my testimony.

LATE

HB-1286

Submitted on: 2/8/2021 3:20:45 PM

Testimony for PDP on 2/9/2021 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Gregg Nelson	Napili Kai Beach Resort	Support	No

Comments:

Dear House Committee Members,

Thank you for reviewing and considering HB 1286. I, along with the staff of my resort support this bill as we recognize the need to simplify and better organize the numerous restrictions related to travel from the mainland to Hawaii. Many potential guests to our resort have cancelled their trips because they found the travel rules to confusing. Many other guests who were able to navigate through the rules and arrived on Maui, complained about the process. If we want tourism and our economy to return, we need to address this situation soon and HB 1286 is a good effort towards remedying the challenge. Thank you for your consideration. Mahalo Gregg Nelson, General Manager, Napili Kai Beach Resort.

LATE

HB-1286

Submitted on: 2/8/2021 3:24:41 PM

Testimony for PDP on 2/9/2021 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Juan Wilson	IslandBReath.org	Oppose	No

Comments:

The wide disparity of medical services from island to island in Hawaii, coupled with the inability to move freely at any time from one island to another makes a universal set of rules regarding how to handle the COVID pandemic with one set of state regulations not only impracticable, but dangerous.

Here on Kauai we have less than a dozen ICU beds. Even the impact of one infected mainland family arriving in Lihue Airport has a disproportionate impact on the people of Kauai.

A better use of Legislation efforts would be to see how Hawaii could move to an economy based on self reliance and ditch our addiction to tourism and the military.

Be here now! There is not much time to waste on what has made a mess in the past.

LATE

HB-1286

Submitted on: 2/8/2021 3:28:45 PM

Testimony for PDP on 2/9/2021 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Katy Britzmann	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

We are in support of the consistent SAFE Travels Program for all islands. While the resort bubble is working for a handful of smaller resorts on Kauai, it IS NOT a viable business model for larger resorts. Unfortunately the statistics being reported on KAUAI island's occupancy are NOT accurate and must be verified. Many business on Kauai are temporarily or permanently closed, unemployment is high, arrivals are dismal, airlines are pulling out, and most importantly, PEOPLE ARE SUFFERING. We might be on the lowest "tier", but it has come at an enormous cost to the island residents' mental and economic well-being.

Long term hospitality workers/residents are leaving the island to find work, while housing prices surge to an all time high. We are seeing the purchasing of homes sight unseen by those with wealth, drivng up housing and making it unaffordable for our front line and manager level associates.

We need to find a better balance and with the vaccine rolling out, now is the time to bring the islands together.

LATE

HB-1286

Submitted on: 2/8/2021 3:38:38 PM

Testimony for PDP on 2/9/2021 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Linda Twitchell	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

I oppose this bill because it overrides's Kauai's abiity to decide for itself how to handle quarantine. The Mayor who listens and responds to the people of Kauai should be able to determine what is appropriate for Kauai and not be forced to conform to statewide rules.

LATE

HB-1286

Submitted on: 2/8/2021 3:44:58 PM

Testimony for PDP on 2/9/2021 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Leila Summers	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

I am Leila Summers testifying in strong opposition to HB1286. I live on the county of Kaua'i, and even recently graduated from KCC with a Hospitality Tourism Management degree. Since we have a much smaller health care system than other counties, it keeps my mother from returning home. Having a smaller community allows us to look after one another but in no way does that change the capacity of our health care system, regardless of our interests or careers. We can not afford to allow this illness to break free.

Much time and sacrifice has been vested, so that we can quickly, and safely move in a direction towards a life we once knew, get our keiki back to school, and while keeping our loved ones with us. We are all so close.

With vaccinations outpouring, and bubble resorts successfully in operation, we must not be hasty. HB1286 will devalue everyone's efforts in keeping Covid spread down, and will unequivocally result in the same outcome we saw while participating in the State's Safe Travel Program that began October 15,2020. Thankfully our admirable Mayor Kawakami opted out.

It is simple to understand, as it should be to accept, that each county functions with its own resources and finesse. Our elected leaders should embrace our health and safety over trying to prematurely attempt to enliven an economy, or moreover the hospitality industry, that will, without a doubt, finds itself thriving, and over capacity, once again in little time. We are actually very resilient, showing occupancy on the rise even now. We are Hawai'i. People will never stop visiting our state.

HB1286 should not be passed in an attempt. It should only be passed because it will work. After experiencing the results of the Safe Travel Program last fall, I am strongly opposed to HB1286. Kaua'i should not be forced to adopt protocols that will certainly result in the further spread of this devastating disease. Please stand in opposition to this bill, and let Kaua'i make its own decisions about opening.

Mahalo,
Leila Summers

Lihue, HI

LATE

HB-1286

Submitted on: 2/8/2021 3:46:15 PM

Testimony for PDP on 2/9/2021 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Rita Norman	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Our community cannot go on like this, we need to open the island to tourism. Unemployment leads the country in our little county, and people have gone without resources for weeks and even months. We want to go back to work with responsible tourism, that includes proper testing. How long can we expect to be on lock down?

LATE

HB-1286

Submitted on: 2/8/2021 3:51:23 PM

Testimony for PDP on 2/9/2021 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Alfred F Kelly	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

The outer Islands have their own issues which is why we have our own mayors and county councils.

LATE

HB-1286

Submitted on: 2/8/2021 3:55:57 PM

Testimony for PDP on 2/9/2021 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Ruth E. Piccard	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

PLEASE OPPOSE HB 1286

Please vote against HB1286, in *any* form, that would prevent Mayor Kawakami from protecting the residents of Kaua'i from COVID19. Kaua'i has had the lowest incidence of COVID cases in the state, which documents that Kaua'i's approach is safer.

While some businesses on Kaua'i think that opting out is causing their hardship, Hawai'i economist, Paul Brewbaker, has argued that it is not the COVID restrictions imposed by government that are hurting the economy, but it is the prevalence of the virus that keeps people from participating in the marketplace. By allowing the virus to continue to spread in the other counties in Hawai'i, the 1-test plan is delaying economic recovery.

Even if you disagree with the above, please do not put monetary gain above Kaua'i residents lives. We are counting on you to allow our mayor to keep us safe. It is your moral and ethical duty.

Mahalo,

Ruth E Piccard

LATE

HB-1286

Submitted on: 2/8/2021 4:01:03 PM

Testimony for PDP on 2/9/2021 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Christine Litwin-Sanguinetti	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

Though I am sympathetic with the economic hardships on our island (Kauai) due to the mayor's plan, as a retired physician I cannot support the "safe travels program" which has proved to be not safe at all. A reasonable program with a pretravel negative test and and 3 or 4 day post test would truly supply a safe travel experience to all.

Each island is different and should be able to set there own rules and suffer or enjoy the consequences.

Thank you for your time.

LATE

HB-1286

Submitted on: 2/8/2021 4:00:08 PM

Testimony for PDP on 2/9/2021 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Julio Magalhães	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

Dear Honorable Members of the State Legislature:

I am writing to **strongly oppose HB1286** which proposes to exempt any person from post-arrival mandatory self-quarantine if the person receives a negative test result prior to arrival. Each county should have the option of requiring a mandatory self-quarantine if such quarantine is deemed necessary by the Mayor after obtaining science-based guidance from the County's Health Director, obtaining input from the community, and obtaining approval from the Governor--- as has been the case until now.

Each island has its own needs based on its geography, demography, and customs and priorities. The unfolding of the Covid-19 pandemic on Kaua'i provides an excellent example of the need to give each Mayor discretion and flexibility in determining what is best for their island as far as requiring a mandatory quarantine to limit injection of Covid-19 from travelers. Thanks to early bold leadership by our Mayor, Kaua'i has been one of the most effective places in the world to keep Covid-19 under control. Case counts remained extremely low and no fatalities occurred on Kaua'i between the start of the pandemic in March until October. When Covid-19 cases rapidly climbed in late October and November after the institution of the State's Safe Travels Program, Mayor Kawakami's reimposition of the mandatory 10-day self-quarantine allowed Covid-19 case counts to drop dramatically and allowed Kauai's non-tourist economy to remain open and lives to remain as normal as possible within the needs of social distancing.

The economic impacts on the tourist economy will not be solved unless the Covid-19 health impacts are resolved first. Examples from other economies such as New Zealand provide a clear example of this basic fact of nature and economics. It is not possible to negotiate with nature when you are dealing with the exponential growth of a virus. The ultimate reality of economic activity is that it depends on proper functioning of the natural world for the economy to function properly. Moreover, Kaua'i has a strong spirit of coming together and helping during disasters, and this spirit is shining through to help those affected by the economic impacts of Covid-19.

Mahalo for your consideration, and I again strongly urge you to vote "no" on HB1286.

Sincerely,

Julio M

LATE

HB-1286

Submitted on: 2/8/2021 4:02:20 PM

Testimony for PDP on 2/9/2021 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Art Ignacio	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

I am concerned about the proposed HB1286 - Relating to Travel. The two points of concern:

- Preempts HRS 127A for all levels at the State and County level
- Forces the single test protocol to avoid quarantine across all Counties

On the first point, Kauai has demonstrated the need and effectiveness of making timely decisions and acting quickly. The County leadership acted well ahead of the other islands, taking the same effective measures as other countries, notably New Zealand's "Go Hard, Go Early" lead. When other counties were struggling with contact tracing, in June Kauai already had 78 contact tracers trained, double the national recommendation of 30 per 100,000. Our COVID-19 numbers demonstrate the effectiveness of the decisions. The programs and actions to support the residents and businesses, aided by the CARES Act funds, demonstrated that needs were also understood.

Although Gov. Ige suspended County authority with the Fourteenth Proclamation, he has been sufficiently responsive and timely, something I am uncertain would continue at the State legislative level.

On the second point, the experience on Kauai is that the single test protocol was not working. As Public Health Officer, Dr. Berreman [reported](#) on the program in November when Kauai requested to opt out of the Safe Travels:

"[W]e have confirmed 58 new cases and our first on-island death. Forty-eight of those cases were travelers—27 visitors and 21 residents. Most of them had a negative pre-travel test, but still came down with COVID here on Kaua'i."

This action was unanimously supported by the County Council in November with the passing of [Resolution No. 2020-57](#) that agreed with opting out of Safe Travels if a second test plan was not approved.

We are going into a dangerous time for the pandemic. The more contagious B.1.1.7 variant that is moving to become the dominant variant would be especially harmful to Kauai because of its size and the interconnectedness of the residents. The timing would be especially bad, given that we have not yet completed

Phase 1C of the vaccinations, which would include restaurant workers, "visitor accommodation" workers, and the remaining kupuna over 65. And we are on the verge of receiving continued economic and health support under the new administration that is needed to weather the pandemic.

LATE

HB-1286

Submitted on: 2/8/2021 4:20:46 PM

Testimony for PDP on 2/9/2021 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Terrie Hayes and Llewelyn Kaohelaui'i	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

WE OPPOSE HB 1286. As Local residents on the south shore in Po'ipu, we are acutely aware of the impacts of opening up travel prematurely here on Kauai. Thanks to our MAYOR, we have been able to "Slow the Spread of Covid 19."

This island of Kauai is unique to the Island chain, in that WE ONLY HAVE 9 ICU BEDS AVAILABLE! Allow Kauai to lead by example! We have the lowest case count here!!

With the NEW STRAIN of the virus ramping up cases on the mainland, and Africa, and elsewhere, WE NEED MORE CAUTION, and not more tourists. Take heed from the news in Tahiti, New Zeland and Australia!

Or as my mother would say "an Ounce of PREVENTION is worth a POUND of Cure!"

Mahalo, Terrie Hayes and Llewelyn Kaohelaui'i

LATE

HB-1286

Submitted on: 2/8/2021 4:27:50 PM

Testimony for PDP on 2/9/2021 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Dr. Irene Sherman	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

PLEASE oppose this bill. One size does NOT fit all. Our Mayors know local conditions and act accordingly in the best interests of ALL their citizens. If this bill passes, the people of Kauai will be put at risk of a COVID outbreak our infrastructure can not support.

LATE

HB-1286

Submitted on: 2/8/2021 4:39:02 PM

Testimony for PDP on 2/9/2021 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Caren Diamond	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

Please oppose HB1286 and continue to allow Kauai to make decisions regarding safe travels.

LATE

HB-1286

Submitted on: 2/8/2021 4:59:23 PM

Testimony for PDP on 2/9/2021 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Richard Russell	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

I oppose HB1286 and any other attempt to limit the ability of outer island mayors to do their job and protect their population from Corvid 19. The fact that we live on individual islands makes it entirely appropriate to create separate policies based upon the individual circumstance on each island; and local government is the appropriate level at which to make these policies. This bill is a blatent attempt by commerical interests that are not part of our community to put their own narrow financial interest ahead of our public health. Shame on you!

Respectfully,

Richard Russell

Koloa, HI

LATE

HB-1286

Submitted on: 2/8/2021 5:13:04 PM

Testimony for PDP on 2/9/2021 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Eliel Starbright	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

The outer islands have their own issues and that's why we have our own Mayors and County Councils.

Mahalo nui loa,

LATE

HB-1286

Submitted on: 2/8/2021 5:37:13 PM

Testimony for PDP on 2/9/2021 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Kathleen K. Raskowsky	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

House of Representatives,

I support HB1268 and hope that you will support this bill. Our state needs to make traveling to our islands easier. Hawaii is losing tourists not only to covid but now to other tourist destinations that are more welcoming. Please support this bill and also consider making anyone who has received the vaccination to be exempt from showing a negative covid test. The state needs to get tourists back responsibly and help our local economies grow again.

thsnk you,

Kathleen K. Raskowsky

LATE

HB-1286

Submitted on: 2/8/2021 5:40:42 PM

Testimony for PDP on 2/9/2021 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
John Sanguinetti	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

This bill is yet another attempt to exert authority over the mayors of the neighbor islands for no good purpose. There are two reasons why this bill is a bad idea:

1) The health situation which this bill addresses is one which requires flexibility in public health policy. By having the legislature making the rules, it turns what should be executive decisions into laws that the legislature has to pass. This reduces the needed flexibility dramatically. It turns public health policy into political policy.

2) This bill explicitly overrules the current decisions of the mayors of the neighbor islands and prohibits them from making future decisions concerning the single most important factor in controlling the spread of a virus. The mayors are by far the most well-placed officials to make decisions about controlling the spread of Covid-19 on their islands. The governor is the next most well placed official. Beyond the mayors and the governor, we leave the realm of qualified public officials. The legislature is not a competent body to make public health rules.

It should be emphasized that the mayors are the ones who know their communities' resources, constituents, and needs best. That's their job, and they have been doing it well during this pandemic. Kauai, Maui, and Hawaii are very different from Oahu and different from each other. They have different population densities from Oahu by more than an order of magnitude and very different health care resources. It defies common sense to think that policies concerning controlling a virus epidemic that are appropriate for Oahu are appropriate for such different islands. On Kauai, we saw what happened when the mayor's travel policy was overruled by the governor in the name of uniformity. The number of Covid-19 infections exploded -- in less than four weeks there were more Covid-19 cases than there had been on the island in the previous 6 months. All were travel-related. If this bill passes, the same thing will happen, and the mayor will be forced to take more drastic actions that will adversely impact the economy even more than it already has been. Will the legislature then pass another bill prohibiting the mayors from taking other public actions? What happens when we run out of hospital beds? Do we ship Covid-19 cases to Oahu?

If we continue with current policies which are effective, at least on Kauai, vaccination will reduce the risk of infection dramatically in a foreseeable period of time, and the

economy will be able to get back to a more normal state. This bill will be counter-productive. It is a bad idea.

LATE

HB-1286

Submitted on: 2/8/2021 5:44:53 PM

Testimony for PDP on 2/9/2021 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Criselda Montoya	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Thank you for this bill, it is time for Kauai to open back up to travelers with NO quarantine restrictions. Please pass this so we can get back to work and get this economy going again.

LATE

HB-1286

Submitted on: 2/8/2021 6:06:29 PM

Testimony for PDP on 2/9/2021 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Puanani Rogers	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

My name is Puanani Rogers of Kealia ahupua`a on Kauai and an 81 year old kupuna.

I am testifying in strong opposition to this measure. I am for our County Mayors having the power to make their own decisions on the Covid pandemic, especially our Mayor, Derek Kawakami. We all feel that he is doing a good job of listening to the concerns about the safety of our people and doing a great job of keeping our island safe.

Please kill this bill.

Mahalo,

Puanani Rogers

LATE

HB-1286

Submitted on: 2/8/2021 6:22:25 PM

Testimony for PDP on 2/9/2021 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Amber Coutsos	Maui Chamber of Commerce	Oppose	No

Comments:

Aloha Chair Ichiyama, Vice-Chair Eli and Members of the Committee on Pandemic & Disaster Preparedness and Chair Onishi, Vice-Chair Sayama and Members of the Committee on Labor & Tourism,

We understand the benefits of this bill and believe there is value in a statewide system. However, each county is unique, particularly our tri-island county, and we have seen situations where this could be problematic for Maui County. When we needed to travel between our islands within our county, we had to look at ways to do things differently. Therefore, we have to share our concerns given our situation. We hope to see continued dialogue between the Governor and Mayors to find workable solutions and unify where possible.

Mahalo for the opportunity to provide testimony.

LATE



Hawai'i Convention Center
1801 Kalākāua Avenue, Honolulu, Hawai'i 96815
kelepona tel 808 973 2255
kelepa'i fax 808 973 2253
kahua pa'a web hawaii tourismauthority.org

David Y. Ige
Governor

John De Fries
President and Chief Executive Officer

Statement of
JOHN DE FRIES

Hawai'i Tourism Authority
before the
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON PANDEMIC & DISASTER PREPAREDNESS
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON LABOR & TOURISM

Tuesday, February 9, 2021
8:30 AM
State Capitol, Conference Room #309
via videoconference

In consideration of
HOUSE BILL NO. 1286
RELATING TO TRAVEL

Chairs Ichiyama and Onishi, Vice Chairs Eli and Sayama, and members of the House Committees on Pandemic & Disaster Preparedness and Labor & Tourism: the Hawai'i Tourism Authority (HTA) is **providing comments** on House Bill 1286, which exempts any person from the post-arrival mandatory self-quarantine if the person receives a negative test result prior to arrival. It allows the Hawai'i Department of Health (DOH) to establish conditions for an exemption. It also requires certain COVID-19 tests for travelers who do not have a test result upon arrival to avoid mandatory self-quarantine. It also requires any person who receives a positive test for COVID-19 post-arrival to be responsible for all costs associated with that person's mandatory self-quarantine.

This bill would standardize the protocols across the state for all travelers to Hawai'i and between the counties, which would help to make it less confusing for everyone. There are different protocols for trans-Pacific travelers and interisland travelers, which has been a challenge to navigate and understand. A consistent statewide policy for trans-Pacific and interisland travel that is based on protecting the people and communities of Hawai'i is a prudent approach.

Currently, trans-Pacific travelers must have their negative test results before they depart to Hawai'i. This bill would instead require the results upon arrival, giving travelers several extra hours to receive their test results. This bill would also allow those who don't get their negative test result by the time they arrive to then take another test upon arrival in Hawai'i. Currently, there is no post-arrival testing option, and sometimes, the travelers have delayed results through no fault of their

February 9, 2021

Page 2

own. This bill would also create standardized quarantine exemption requirements across the state and counties.

The statistics show that the Safe Travels pre-travel testing program works as an extra layer of safety while also allowing travelers to fly to Hawai'i without having to quarantine. The Safe Travels program is helping our visitor industry to recover, and we feel that this bill would help speed up the recovery efforts by making the rules easier to understand.

We appreciate this opportunity to provide comments on HB1286.

LATE

HB-1286

Submitted on: 2/8/2021 6:30:11 PM

Testimony for PDP on 2/9/2021 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Crissa Hiranaga	Four Seasons Resort Maui at Wailea	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha Committee Members,

My name is Crissa Hiranaga, and I am the Public Relations Director at Four Seasons Resort Maui at Wailea. I submit this testimony today on behalf of Marc Bromley, General Manager of the Resort:

Dear Committee Members,

My name is Marc Bromley, and I am the General Manager of Four Seasons Resort Maui at Wailea. The Resort employs over 1000 Maui residents, all of whom have a vested interest in the visitor industry. My impetus in writing today is their livelihood. Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

House Speaker Scott Saiki's proposed measure, which is to be heard tomorrow in a joint hearing of the House Pandemic & Disaster Preparedness and Labor & Tourism Committees, provides necessary amendments to the Safe Travels program to alleviate pre-travel stress on visitors who wish to come safely to Hawai'i. House Bill 1286 is a critical measure for our entire industry and the local economy, as it will codify statewide travel rules and simplify the entire process. In addition to establishing statewide policy, HB1286 will also make available State-approved rapid testing upon arrival in Hawai'i for those that took a pre-arrival test within 72 hours of departure but did not get their results back in time.

The bill also adds further clarity for lodging operations in that it stipulates that visitors who end up testing positive while in Hawai'i are ultimately responsible for securing and paying for all arrangements related to their quarantine and isolation periods.

I stand in support of HB1286, and thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Marc Bromley

General Manager

Four Seasons Resort Maui at Wailea

LATE



phone 808.523.7750
fax 808.522.7866

Roberts Hawaii, Inc.
444 Niu Street, Suite 300
Honolulu, HI 96815

February 8, 2021

Honorable Chairs Linda Ichiyama and Richard Onishi,
Vice Chairs Stacelynn Eli and Jackson Sayama,
& Members of the Committee on Pandemic and Disaster Preparedness and
Committee on Labor and Tourism

Re: Testimony in Support of HB1286

www.robertshawaii.com

Chairs Ichiyama and Onishi, Vice-Chairs Eli and Sayama, and Members of the
Committee on Pandemic and Disaster Preparedness and Committee on Labor and
Tourism:

Roberts Hawaii *strongly* supports House Bill 1286, which sets forth requirements
to be applied across the state and counties for pre-arrival and post-
arrival testing and mandatory quarantine, along with circumstances upon which
travelers may be exempt.

As an organization that directly engages with the visitors and the travel industry
in Hawaii, we believe a uniform and consistent approach needs to be applied
across the State. Such an approach would ensure that safeguards could be
effectively implemented, while at the same time helping our visitors and
residents to be able to understand and to comply with the requirements.

Due to the varying approaches that have been applied to date, we
believe a consistent standard seems appropriate, because COVID-19 is a
statewide concern and visitors will travel between islands. Although we are not
commenting on the specific requirements of the bill, we respectfully suggest the
final language of the bill should take into consideration input from the counties to
ensure the testing requirements are appropriate statewide.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.

Sincerely,

Roy Pfund
President & Chief Executive Officer
Roberts Hawaii

Testimony of
Rob Robinson
Vice President
Springboard Hospitality

Committee Pandemic & Disaster Preparedness
Committee on Labor & Tourism
House Bill 1286: Relating to Statewide Safe Travels Program Exemption; COVID-19; Quarantine

Chair Ichiyama, Chair Onishi, and members of the Committees,

Mahalo for the opportunity to submit testimony on behalf of Springboard Hospitality. Springboard Hospitality is a locally-owned company that operates 10 hotels across the Hawaiian Islands.

Springboard Hospitality strongly supports House Bill 1286 and the need for consistent, statewide guidelines to allow for tourism to restart safely and effectively. While we recognize the importance of “home rule” and allowing the county mayors to decide what is best for their communities, the lack of cohesion in rules for travelers and returning residents to Hawai‘i has led to significant confusion, further harming an industry already suffering an unprecedented economic downturn. While we believe that the individual Mayors acted with the best interest of their constituents in mind, the efforts to re-boot tourism and safely allow inbound travel have failed to create even the beginnings of a meaningful recovery.

A recent special study issued by the Hawai‘i Tourism Authority indicated that the single most prevalent reason that stopped travelers from visiting Hawai‘i was that testing requirements were unreasonable. Moreover, the same study indicated that 21% of respondents had trouble sourcing a COVID-19 test from a Trusted Partner and 46% felt that the 72-hour window was troublesome. What was once perception has now become reality. The Washington Post recently ran an article titled “Hawaii wants tourists. Tourists want Hawaii. But the rules are complicated,” which highlighted that our convoluted rules are serving as a deterrent to prospective visitors who are finding themselves navigating confusing requirements for both travel to the state and within the counties. Springboard has been a strong proponent of a clear, statewide policy that provides clarity and simplicity for healthy travelers to come to Hawai‘i. We have also been urging our local government to provide travelers with the option to take a second, rapid COVID-19 test upon arrival should they not receive their pre-arrival test result in time. The State has the tests and facilities needed to make this possible, and we also know that two counties are already providing rapid tests to travelers and have the facilities and know-how to execute this.

For these reasons, Springboard Hospitality strongly supports House Bill 1286.

Thank you for the opportunity to offer this testimony.

Sincerely,



Rob Robinson
Springboard Hospitality

LATE

HB-1286

Submitted on: 2/8/2021 7:46:41 PM

Testimony for PDP on 2/9/2021 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Alison Lewis	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

I oppose HB 1286 because it seems to remove the power of each island's mayor to establish more restrictive arrival protocols as needed. Outer islands have limited medical facilities and limited ICU capability and should ALWAYS be allowed to set stricter arrival protocols than Oahu.

Alison Lewis

Hanapepe, Kauai

LATE

HB-1286

Submitted on: 2/8/2021 7:34:47 PM

Testimony for PDP on 2/9/2021 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Janell Y Y Beattie	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Support HB1286

mahalo

LATE

HB-1286

Submitted on: 2/8/2021 7:32:49 PM

Testimony for PDP on 2/9/2021 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Ikaika Sarkissian	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I support this HB1286. Thank you!

LATE

HB-1286

Submitted on: 2/8/2021 8:07:30 PM

Testimony for PDP on 2/9/2021 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Steven Lopes	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Thank you for the opportunity to speak. As a recent vacation owner on the island of Kauai, I have been amazed by the lack of direction and ping-pong politics regarding participating in the safe travels program. This confusion has caused total uncertainty in both travelers and businesses in making or keeping any travel plans to the island of Kauai and having businesses open and operating. Travelers cannot possibly be expected to make plans and spend monies to visit when the rules and requirements are ever changing. Of the bookings I had in 2020, all but one cancelled leaving my residence vacant for most of the year. The one that came was during that short window when Kauai was part of the Safe Travels program. No other traveler from my bookings was willing to navigate either the complex and more costly option of staying in a bubble quarantine (even when I offered to cover part of the cost) or juggling the timing of testing, traveling to another island first, testing again and then trying to be granted entry on Kauai. They either canceled coming to Hawaii entirely or went to one of the other islands still participating in the Safe Travels program. For the week ending on January 20, 2021 Kauai had a dismal average of 19 travelers/day, for a total of 134 for the week according to the state HTA's passenger arrival data. For good or ill, Hawaii is hugely dependent on tourism dollars. Allowing Kauai to opt out has only shifted and increased Kauai's financial burden to the other islands and the federal government to meet Kauai's fiscal needs which is unfair. It is discriminatory that I, as a TVR, am required to continue paying my already high property taxes but I am banned from making any income to pay that tax because I am not a bubble resort. Business after business on Kauai has closed their doors – some permanently after years of investment and generations of ownership because there are no tourism dollars to support them. What a blow to these owners to lose everything they have worked a lifetime to build and, in some cases, generations to build such as the Ono Family Restaurant in Kappa that has closed its doors forever after 40 years. As the owner of that restaurant, Kenny Ishii said in the Honolulu Civil Beat on Decemeber 15th, 2020 "You can't just turn off travel. We can't survive without it." As each business fails, more locals are displaced, lose health insurance and turn to the county coffers and, in the case of Kauai being the most travel restrictive island, becoming a welfare state that looks to the others islands and fed money to bail them out. Homelessness has swelled to record numbers at Anini Beach, Lydgate Park and elsewhere. Locals are now reliant on food stamps, restaurant cards and unemployment checks. Kauai life and tourist appeal has been, and continues to be, decimated by Kawakami, his policies and his ability to 'opt-out'. One state – one rule. Thank you for your time.

LATE

HB-1286

Submitted on: 2/8/2021 6:31:16 PM

Testimony for PDP on 2/9/2021 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Anonymous	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha,

Thank you for intruducing this bill. There is al ot of confusion for poeple traveling to Hawaii. It is efficient and fair to have the same travel rules for every Island. Kauai has been making their own rules and businesses are suffering. They are saying that the Hotel capacity in Kauai is the same as other Island but the numbers are being manipulated:

- 1) They are not including the 3 Hotels that are shut down in their math: the Sheraton , the Hyatt and the Mariot.
- 2) They are not Including Vacation Rentals: In all other Isalnds, Vacatoin rentals are open

Why not follow the example of the other Islands especially when the Safe Travels program is working. Businesses are suufering and shutting down. The EIDL loans will have to be repaid at some point and if this economy crisis continues, it will only get worse!

We are one State, every Isalnd should have the same Travel Rules. It will be also great to consider welcoming visitors that already took both of their vaccine shots.

Please approve this bill, let's travel safely and help all businesses reopen.

Mahalo!

LATE

HB-1286

Submitted on: 2/8/2021 8:41:44 PM

Testimony for PDP on 2/9/2021 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Cara Flores	HALE Hawai'i	Oppose	No

Comments:

This bill while well intentioned can have huge unintended consequences.

- 1) We have new more contagious variants now in our state. If these variants spread and increase like they have elsewhere we may need to quickly pivot and change our travel protocol because our communities and hospitals are overwhelmed. This will hinder our ability to act quickly if our communities get inundated with a new more dangerous variant.
- 2) This bill treats all islands as if they are equal. This is unfair to the neighbor islands. All the neighbor islands have different levels of available medical infrastructure, different amounts of tourism, different budgets, and different school situations. I am on the island of Maui and very concerned.
 - a) Maui families have been very much harmed by the "Safe Travels" program. Our schools were in the green on DOH school metrics (in person school) for all of October now we have been in purple for over a month (learning from home).
 - b) Maui's cases per population is now equal to Portland, OR so the Safe Travels program is NOT working for Maui.
 - c) Maui hospital is strained and full regularly. It can quickly be completely overwhelmed which will cause people to unnecessarily die. This program can completely devastate our island if our hospital gets overwhelmed because there is no way to put on the breaks.
- 3) There are other plans that could allow tourism and keep residents safer. I would be happy to send some to you. If the whole state is going to adopt a plan it should be one that all the counties would be glad to adopt. The neighbor counties have all rejected the current program which is why there are different requirements. The Safe Travel program is not considered safe enough for counties with limited resources. It is not right to force a less safe plan onto counties without their consent. It is very Oahu-centric and very oppressive towards "neighbor" islands. This plan does not have aloha and is not very neighborly.

a) One plan that is widely supported as a better protocol by many renowned experts in Hawaii is the "Safer Travel" plan. It can be found here:

<https://halehawaii.cc/safertravels> (I would be more than happy to explain it.)

b) Maybe this or a similar Safer program would be more acceptable to neighbor counties and would be voluntarily adopted.

c) Please consider the message this bill sends to neighbor counties. It sends a loud and clear message that residents in neighbor counties and our voices do not matter. This bill's purpose is to take apart plans and protocols that were painstakingly put together by counties despite opposition on all sides of the COVID-19 debate. The Safe Travels plan was considered and rejected by neighbor counties. To force more cases of COVID19 onto the neighbor counties with no ability to locally put on the brakes is very authoritarian and unethical. It will cause division and non-reversible resentment towards visitors and Oahu. Forcing counties to follow a plan that is already failing in Maui and widely rejected in Kauai and Hawai'i is not pono.

d) Our county Mayors and local DOH representatives can see what is happening on the ground here in real time and need to be able to respond to it quickly.

e) As a state we should only adopt and pursue a statewide plan that all county mayors would voluntarily gladly adopt. Otherwise we should let each county have a plan that fits their comfort level based on the local infrastructure and needs.

LATE

HB-1286

Submitted on: 2/8/2021 9:09:44 PM

Testimony for PDP on 2/9/2021 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Linda C. Mitchell	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I think the passage of this bill would make travel to Hawaii less confusing. We need to get the economy going again. As an owner of two legal vacation rentals who had no rental income for months, I am for making the system less complicated. We are still experiencing more outlay of money than inflow.

Please add to this bill that those who have had two shots of the vaccine would not need to be tested for Covid before arriving in Hawaii. Testing those who have been vaccinated would be a waste of resources and an unnecessary expense for the traveler.

LATE

HB-1286

Submitted on: 2/8/2021 9:19:00 PM

Testimony for PDP on 2/9/2021 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Carly Clement	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Working for a resort in Waikiki that has remained open during the pandemic, I have personally been able to see how ever-changing messaging across the various counties causes confusion and hesitation for visitors traveling to the state.

While I recognize the importance of "home rule" and allowing the county mayors to decide what is best for their communities, the lack of cohesion in rules for travelers and returning residents to Hawai'i has led to significant confusion, further harming an industry already suffering an unprecedented economic downturn. As such, I strongly support House Bill 1286

LATE

HB-1286

Submitted on: 2/8/2021 9:19:36 PM

Testimony for PDP on 2/9/2021 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Mistee Bailey-Myrick	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

- Please **do not pass HB1286**, which will effectively take away the voices of residents that reside on each island. Outer island voices matter and have made a difference in this unprecedented time in history. **OUR VOICES MATTER!** Please do not force more cases of Covid-19 to Kauai by taking away our Mayor's voice and local power (it is already too limited).
- Mayor Kawakami, Senate President Kouchi, and all of Kauai's State Reps have done a fantastic job **keeping Kauai safe and informed**. This bill will take our Mayor's voice away, which takes away our voices, the residents.
- Every island is different and has different infrastructure and different needs. Every island has different health care capabilities, school and community capacities, as well as geographic differences that already lead to challenges in health resources, despite Covid-19.
- This bill is the equivalent of taking away the Mayor of each island's individual power. I am curious to know how each member of our local legislation would feel if their power to vote on things that directly affected their home districts was stripped away? That is what this bill would do to each of the Mayor.
- Kauai, in particular, has remained safe and has the lowest numbers in the state **BECAUSE** Mayor Kawakami took action early and paid attention to every single case that tested positive on **HIS** island. He was and is keenly aware of how many of the **NINE ICU BEDS** were/are full in our **ONE** local hospital that has ventilator capability and the staff that can operate it.
- Kauai has been successful and suffered less loss **BECAUSE** Mayor Kawakami had the option to **OPT OUT** of the "safe travels" program (it's not actually safe, we all know this).
- There are serious loopholes in the "safe travels" program that each Mayor has worked on helping to eliminate based on their specific island needs.
- Each Mayor has their finger on the pulse of their own community.
- Kauai's people are **NOT** in favor of this Oahu centric (imagine that) bill that will take away the hard work that we've all done to keep our respective communities safe.
- The people of Kauai have responded to this pandemic by coming together because of our Mayor and his unique position to make decisions that are specifically for **OUR ISLAND**.
- The people of Kauai support the Mayor's authority and do not want to see that taken away.

Please do NOT pass this bill, as it will lead to negative consequences and more loss for our tiny island home of Kauai. Please do not take away my voice as a member of the health care community of Kauai. This bill is a terrible mistake that will cost the lives of our own people, as we work together on a local level to live with this terrible virus. Put yourself in the shoes of outer island residents and outer island Mayor's. We know that we have had to make sacrifices, but we are successful because of those sacrifices and the respect we have for our local leaders decisions. We do not need an Oahu centric bill to tell us what we should do at a local level.

Mahalo,

Mistee Bailey-Myrick

Lihue, HI



HAWAII
FOOD & WINE
FESTIVAL®

LATE

PRESENTED BY



First Hawaiian Bank. &



mastercard

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Roy Yamaguchi
Chair

Alan Wong
Vice-Chair

Sharon Brown
Secretary

Meredith Ching
Treasurer

Vikram Garg
Director

Val Iwashita
Director

Warren Shon
Director

Mark Teruya
Director

Shep Gordon
Director

February 8, 2021

Testimony of
Denise Hayashi Yamaguchi
CEO
Hawaii Food & Wine Festival

Committee Pandemic & Disaster Preparedness
Committee on Labor & Tourism

House Bill 1286: Relating to Statewide Safe Travels Program Exemption; COVID-19;
Quarantine

Chair Ichiyama, Chair Onishi, and members of the Committees,

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in support of House Bill 1286.

The Hawai'i Food & Wine Festival (HFWF) is a nonprofit organization that has worked over the last eleven years to support the visitor industry by putting a spotlight on Hawai'i as a culinary destination. There are thousands who benefit from the important work of the HFWF including, chefs, farmers, ranchers, fisherman, students, airlines, hotels, etc. by participating in event that uplifts and supports Hawai'i's number one industry – tourism.

A recent special study issued by the Hawai'i Tourism Authority indicated that the number one reason that has stopped travelers to from visiting Hawai'i was that testing requirements are unreasonable. Moreover, the same study indicated that 21% of respondents had trouble sourcing a COVID-19 test from a Trusted Partner and 46% felt that the 72-hour window was troublesome. What was once perception has now become reality. The Washington Post recently ran an article titled "Hawaii wants tourists. Tourists want Hawaii. But the rules are complicated," which highlighted that rules are serving as a deterrent to prospective visitors who are finding themselves navigating confusing requirements for both travel to the state and within the counties.

Our businesses and our people will suffer if we are not able to work together in the best interest of our community. We strongly support a clear, statewide policy that provides clarity and simplicity for healthy travelers to come to Hawai'i. HFWF, in partnership with Hawaii Tourism Lodging Association (HLTA) has also been urging our local government to provide travelers with the option to take a second, rapid COVID-19 test upon arrival should they not receive their pre-arrival test result in time. The State has the tests and facilities needed to make this possible. For these reasons, we strongly support House Bill 1286.

Thank you for the opportunity to offer this testimony.

LATE

2021, 2-8 Testimony Opposing HB1286.doc

TESTIMONY Re: HB1286, HI State Legislature

Dear Committee Members:

My husband and I strongly oppose limiting individual mandates by our island Mayors for the welfare of each individual island's people and considering each island's individual circumstances and desires.

We are grateful for the strict mandates our mayor Derek Kawakami has put in place during the COVID-19 Pandemic times. It is evident that his action has been successful. Kaua`ii is no doubt the safest place on the planet at this time because of his ability to call the shots for his constituents, rather than to bow to rules laid down by someone on O`ahu. The COVID-19 count is all the evidence needed to back our case: **OPPOSITION TO HB 1286.**

Thank you,
Dawn Kawahara
Delano Kawahara

4121 Rice St.,#309, Lihu`e, HI 96766-1475

LATE

HB-1286

Submitted on: 2/8/2021 9:31:46 PM

Testimony for PDP on 2/9/2021 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Laura Fisher	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

Aloha,

Thank you for listening. As someone on a "neighbor" island, it's often frustrating to be locked into a state where one island with the most people gets all the news, all the weather reports, and the greatest number of resources and vaccines.

Hawaii has islands outside of Oahu. I live on Maui, and our resources, hospital beds, and situation is not the same as Oahu. No one knows our situation better than we do. Each individual island needs to be able to adapt. This HB1286 is too risky for the other islands.

We are not a one-size fits all. Tourism can't be wide-open for everyone. It's way too dangerous and reckless. Where is the "aloha" in your plan for us?

Variants are here, infections will grow, and then what? Our decisions are made by Oahu?

That's not going to work.

LATE

HB-1286

Submitted on: 2/8/2021 9:35:09 PM

Testimony for PDP on 2/9/2021 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Marion McHenry	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

This is a very bad bill. I strongly oppose. Because of the extra safety measures in place on Kauai, due to the thoughtful choices of our mayor, Kauai has remained in tier 4. This has allowed our small businesses to stay open and the community of Kauai to support them. This has also allow visitors to come with the extra level of safety and testing.

This bill would strip the mayors of each island from protecting their communities. It appears the bill would also disable the governor's ability to enact emergency Covid-19 response.

Because we have not been fighting this terrible disease here on Kauai, we have been able to put our resources into vaccinating and preventing the spread. This will allow Kauai to open more to visitors sooner and bring more income to our struggling businesses.

I believe that HB1286 should die in committee. Allow our mayors to decide what is best for our individual communities. Do not force the mayors to ignore CDC guidelines.

Sincerely,

Marion McHenry

Princeville, Kauai

LATE

HB-1286

Submitted on: 2/8/2021 9:44:30 PM

Testimony for PDP on 2/9/2021 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Josh Hargrove	Prince Waikiki	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha Pandemic & Disaster Preparedness and Labor & Tourism Committee,

My name is Josh Hargrove and I am the General Manager of the Prince Waikiki & the Hawaii Prince Golf Club. I am writing to you in support of house bill 1286.

This bill provides much needed clarity and simplification to our state's varied and confusing rules that differ county by county. In addition to clarity, this bill eliminates the unnessacary and punitive nature of the current policy that requires arriving guests to quarantine for the full 10 days despite being tested by a trusted partner, being tested within the 72 hour timeframe, but not recieving their test results in time due to no fault of their own. Providing clarity and options to these "ideal travelers" who have followed all of our rules and made every effort to travel to our state the right way, is a good direction.

We need policies that allow our economy to recover, and to recover without sacrificing safety. This bill accomplishes both of these criteria instead of choosing one or the other.

I strongly support this bill and believe the result will be more travelers to Hawaii with negative test results, more jobs for our staff, and more revenues to the many businesses that rely on tourism to survive.

Mahalo,

Josh Hargrove

General Manager

Prince Waikiki & Hawaii Prince Golf Club

LATE

HB-1286

Submitted on: 2/8/2021 9:47:54 PM

Testimony for PDP on 2/9/2021 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Jared Ellis	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha Chair Ichiyama, Chair Onishi, and members of the Committees,

I am testifying today in strong support of this measure.

In the months since travel has been restored to Hawai'i, it has become all the more apparent that our state needs travel to be revived if or economy is to begin any meaningful recovery. This will require travelers to come here with a semblance of regularity.

Unfortunately, local studies have shown that the convoluted pre-arrival process remains of the most significant deterrents for prospective tourists at this point. It is critical that the State establish clear, concise rules that would allow tested travelers to come here with ease. Until that happens, the tourism industry and, by extension, the entire local economy, will continue to suffer.

I support this measure and urge you to consider it closely before passing it.

Mahalo,

Jared Ellis

LATE

HB-1286

Submitted on: 2/8/2021 9:53:44 PM

Testimony for PDP on 2/9/2021 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Levana Lomma	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

OPEN UP KAUA'I

UNTIL WE CAN BRING LEGAL ACTION AGAINST ALL OF THIS COVID-19 FRAUDULENT NONSENSE THIS BILL WILL AT LEAST ALLOW TOURISM TO RESUME. FOR THAT REASON ONLY I SUPPORT THIS BILL. THE CRIMINALS VIOLATING OUR RIGHTS TO TRAVEL FREELY AND OUR RIGHTS TO BODILY AUTONOMY WILL BE PUNISHED ACCORDINGLY.

LATE



MAUNA KEA
RESORT

Committee Pandemic & Disaster Preparedness Committee on Labor & Tourism
House Bill 1286: Relating to Statewide Safe Travels Program Exemption; COVID-19; Quarantine

Aloha Chair Ichiyama, Chair Onishi, and members of the Committees, mahalo for the opportunity to submit testimony on HB 1286.

While we recognize the importance of allowing the county mayors to decide what is best for their communities, the lack of cohesion in rules for travelers and returning residents to Hawai'i has led to significant confusion, further harming an industry already suffering an unprecedented economic downturn. As such, Mauna Kea Resort strongly supports House Bill 1286.

The Washington Post recently ran an article titled "Hawaii wants tourists. Tourists want Hawaii. But the rules are complicated," which highlighted that our convoluted rules are serving as a deterrent to prospective visitors who are finding themselves navigating confusing requirements for both travel to the state and within the counties. Mauna Kea resort has been a strong proponent of a clear policy that provides clarity and simplicity for healthy travelers to come to Hawai'i. We also support providing travelers with the option to either provide evidence of a negative test upon arrival or to take a second, rapid COVID-19 test upon arrival should they not receive their pre-arrival test result in time. The State has the tests and facilities needed to make this possible, and our island, Hawaii Island is already providing rapid tests to travelers upon arrival and has the facilities and know-how to execute this.

For these reasons, Mauna Kea resort strongly supports House Bill 1286.

Thank you for the opportunity to offer this testimony.

Craig Anderson
VP Operations, Mauna Kea Resort

62-100 Mauna Kea Beach Drive, Kohala Coast, HI 96743 | Phone: 808.882.7222 | Fax: 808.882.5700 | MaunaKeaResort.com

LATE

HB-1286

Submitted on: 2/8/2021 10:10:57 PM

Testimony for PDP on 2/9/2021 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Lisa Crampton	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

Aloha committee members,

Respectfully I remind you that our state's strength lies in its diversity - the diversity of individuals and also the diverse nature of our different islands. Each island has its own character, its own resources and its own needs. Thus we meet challenges differently and each island needs to retain the ability to do so. Kauai, with its limited hospital resources and infrastructure and older population, needs the flexibility to restrict travel to keep our Covid cases low. The population of this island does not want to contend with the issues, closures, and fears the other islands have experienced as Covid has surged there. There is no harm to the other islands in letting us do it our way. And there is evidence to show that Kauai's economic situation is not greatly different than islands that have chosen to accept fewer travel restrictions but have had to close certain businesses due to Covid. The latest occupancy numbers released last week document that the islands are all performing similarly. And any savvy tourist can figure out different rules for different places.

I have another thought to pass along. In my work place and in my social circles, we always adopt the practices that make the most conservative person feel comfortable. If someone doesn't care to dine indoors, we eat out. If every family needs to be at separate tables so be it, even if some of us would be comfortable sitting together. So in that vein, if you feel the need to homogenize the state, I think you should go the other way. Adopt the practices that even the most conservative feel comfortable with. Then you'll have your consistent statewide policies! As Dr Fauci has said, no one should really be traveling right now. So a conservative approach to tourism really makes the most sense for the whole state.

Again, I firmly state my opposition to HB1286 and ask you to really consider whether its passage is in the best interests of all Hawaii's residents.

Best regards,

Dr. Lisa Crampton

3794 Nanakai Rd

Kalaheo HI 96741

LATE

HB-1286

Submitted on: 2/8/2021 10:15:00 PM

Testimony for PDP on 2/9/2021 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Ashley Yonamine	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Committee Pandemic & Disaster Preparedness

Committee on Labor & Tourism

House Bill 1286: Relating to Statewide Safe Travels Program Exemption; COVID-19; Quarantine

Chair Ichiyama, Chair Onishi, and members of the Committees, mahalo for the opportunity to submit testimony in support of this Bill.

It's clear that we as a state need the Safe Travels program. While I recognize the importance of "home rule" and allowing county mayors to decide what is best for their specific communities, the lack of cohesion in rules for travelers as well as returning residents to Hawai'i has led to significant confusion, further harming an industry already suffering an unprecedented economic downturn. My whole family (three household members and I) have each experienced this inconvenience and inconsistency personally, upon our return to Hawai'i from the mainland at various points during the pandemic. As such, I strongly support House Bill 1286.

A recent special study issued by the Hawai'i Tourism Authority indicated that the single most prevalent reason that stopped travelers from visiting Hawai'i was that testing requirements were unreasonable. Moreover, the same study indicated that 21% of respondents had trouble sourcing a COVID-19 test from a Trusted Partner and 46% felt that the 72-hour window was troublesome. What was once perception has now become reality.

The Washington Post recently ran an article titled "Hawaii wants tourists. Tourists want Hawaii. But the rules are complicated," which highlighted that our convoluted rules are serving as a deterrent to prospective visitors who are finding themselves navigating confusing requirements for both travel to the state and within the counties. HLTA has been a strong proponent of a clear, statewide policy that provides clarity and simplicity for healthy travelers to come to Hawai'i. We have also been urging our local government to provide travelers with the option to take a second, rapid COVID-19 test upon arrival should they not receive their pre-arrival test result in time. The State has the tests and facilities needed to make this possible, and we also know that two counties are already providing rapid tests to travelers and have the facilities and know-how to execute this.

For these reasons, I strongly support House Bill 1286.

Thank you for the opportunity to offer this testimony.

LATE

HB-1286

Submitted on: 2/8/2021 10:15:33 PM

Testimony for PDP on 2/9/2021 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
victoria martocci	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

Aloha Chair Ichiyama, Vice Chair Eli, and committee members. Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in OPPOSITION to HB1286.

My name is Victoria Martocci and I'm a resident of West Maui. Our island has been receiving visitors in equal numbers to that of Oahu, seeding the virus to our community at a greater ratio than that of Oahu. And yet our island is allocated a smaller portion of vaccines, and delays in vaccine delivery and distribution on top of that.

Local autonomy is critical during this time, so that local authorities maintain the ability to adapt to changes on the ground in their communities. Therefore I cannot support this bill which would take that autonomy away, and put authority in the hands of State DOH. What is right for Oahu is not always what is best for Maui. If the travel restrictions from County to County are confusing, then better communication is in order, not State-wide, one-size-fits-all policy for neighbor islands.

Thank you for the opportunity to voice my testimony to OPPOSE HB1286.

-Victoria Martocci

LATE

HB-1286

Submitted on: 2/8/2021 10:23:24 PM

Testimony for PDP on 2/9/2021 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Barbara Pendragon	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

Aloha Chair and Committee members of the PDP/LAT Committee,

I oppose HB1286 for the following reasons:

(1) Tests do not necessarily pick up an infection till after the third day. After the fourth day, a test is a more reliable indicator of infection.

(2) Clearly, if infected persons are allowed to travel on an airplane without a negative test result before they depart, others who have cleared a pre-flight test may be infected within the flight.

(3) The reduction in Covid-19 infections on Kauai since the implementation of our island-specific plan, as opposed to the significant increase in Oahu, Maui and Hawaii Counties, indicates a lapse of medical judgement and analysis in the implementation of the current Safe Travels Program. Please do not subject Kauai to this inadequate program, and consider amending it to better protect the remainder of the state.

(4) At what point do you consider the lives lost worth the income generated? A longer quarantine helps protect our population, and a bubble resort with additional testing is better than releasing risk-taking tourists into our streets, stores and neighborhoods. Requiring a negative test result before boarding a plane, coupled with a test after 3 days of quarantine on island at a bubble resort, would reduce the virus load and spread in our communities.

Mahalo for your consideration.

Barbara Pendragon, Kauai

LATE

HB-1286

Submitted on: 2/8/2021 10:28:27 PM

Testimony for PDP on 2/9/2021 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Chip Bahouth	Sheraton Kauai Resort	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha Chair Ichiyama, Chair Onishi, and members of the committees. Mahalo for allowing me the opportunity to submit this testimony.

As the General Manager of the Sheraton Kauai Resort, I have seen firsthand the devastating effects that our county restrictions have had on our local tourism economy.

In the days immediately following the restoration of travel, we had started to see an uptick in visitor arrivals, and we were able to start to bring our people back to work. Unfortunately, since the addition of county-mandated restrictions, we have seen business all but dry up. Our workers have been furloughed, and we are losing millions of dollars per month remaining closed.

The other counties have shown that it is possible to remain open for tourism while also protecting hospitality workers, guests, and local residents from exposure to the COVID-19 virus. By establishing statewide travel rules, the State would all but guarantee that our resort would be able to re-open, tourists would be able to visit here, and we would be able to bring workers back to their jobs sooner rather than later.

I urge you to seriously consider and pass this measure.

Mahalo,

Gerald "Chip" Bahouth

General Manager

Sheraton Kauai Resort

LATE

HB-1286

Submitted on: 2/8/2021 10:45:01 PM

Testimony for PDP on 2/9/2021 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Samira Siale	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

My name is Samira Siale, I'm an administrative assistant for Hawaii Lodging and Tourism Association (HLTA) - Kaua'i Chapter. Our board of directors (BOD) consists of 11 hoteliers and 3 allied members. Since the pandemic one of our main topics of discussion during our BOD meeting has been the constant travel restriction on Kaua'i and how to effectively educate the guests on "OUR" travel restriction prior to their arrival. This has been a task that all the hotels and businesses need to put in extra efforts in educating their guest when they're already under staffed.

Having worked for Enterprise Rent-A-Car, the rent a car agencies are first stop for travelers. I have experienced first hand how these unique set of rules that Kaua'i has for travelers has been confusing for travelers. The extra set of requirements to prove qualification the traveler has to provide can be frustrating, time consuming and often times troublesome as we don't have WIFI access at the airport.

It would be a lot easier both on the traveler as well as our hotels and businesses to follow the same rule across the state.

LATE

HB-1286

Submitted on: 2/8/2021 10:48:25 PM

Testimony for PDP on 2/9/2021 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Jason Paloma	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Mahalo to the Chairs and the Committees for permitting me this opportunity to testify.

The entire state has watched as tourism has struggled to regain its foothold in the islands. It has been reported in numerous instances that travelers are finding Hawaii's pre-arrival program difficult to understand and its requirements difficult to satisfy for a variety of reasons. The establishment of a statewide travel policy would help to combat this and make it amenable for travelers to come here with ease.

As such, I am in strong support of House Bill 1286.

LATE

HB-1286

Submitted on: 2/8/2021 10:38:03 PM

Testimony for PDP on 2/9/2021 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Susan Pcola_Davis	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

I OPPOSE this bill.

The consistent problem in this program has been enforcement. The same problem with the mask mandate.

Self-Quarantine has not and cannot be monitored. The state has relied on hotel reporting, random phone calls, and other methods to no avail.

The state DOES NOT have resources for monitoring or accountability. Prior to opening the gates, there was NO solid plan in place. From airport arrival, documentation of negative test results and mandatory quarantine there were gaps all along the way that were never closed.

In order to have a successful program, the program must be successful in the reason it was developed.

This program was developed to open our doors to tourists SAFELY!

There is NO absolute proof if the success, except for experts saying that the spread and clusters are not from tourists but from residents. Therefore, the program is a success. We proved that it is safe because residents are the spreaders not tourists.

SAFE TRAVELS means its safe for those traveling and it is safe for the population you are visiting!

It is no secret that the island of Maui has been crying for help. Kauai is mayor paved his own way because he wants his people save.

This bill would also prevent mayors from deviations.

It's a poor bill with poor results. But then again its about the almighty dollar, again!

Please do not pass this bill as written unless you can guarantee enforcement and accountability.

LATE



Testimony of
Glenn P. Vergara
Vice President & General Manager
Waikiki Resort Hotel

Committee on Pandemic & Disaster Preparedness
Committee on Labor & Tourism

**House Bill 1286: Relating to Statewide Safe Travels Program Exemption;
COVID-19; Quarantine**

Chair Ichiyama, Chair Onishi, and members of the Committees, mahalo for the opportunity to submit testimony on behalf of Waikiki Resort Hotel and its associates.

Waikiki Resort Hotel employs 130 employees, of which 77% are still furloughed as we struggle to survive with occupancy levels in the 20-35% range. While health coverages for our furloughed members have since expired since the end of last year, they struggle to feed their families.

We are finding that since we reopened in December, many of those who originally were planning to visit our state are choosing instead to take their travel plans to other destinations because of confusion and lack of confidence in our travel policies. Based on feedback from travel partners and prospective customers, they perceive Hawaii as generally "unfriendly" and lacking in aloha, validated by the stringent and convoluted travel rules that are in place.

We are a strong proponent of a clear, uniform, statewide travel policy that provides clarity and simplicity for healthy travelers to come to Hawai'i. We also urge our local government to provide travelers with the option to take a second, rapid COVID-19 test upon arrival should they not receive their pre-arrival test result in time. The State has the tests and facilities needed to make this possible, and we also know that two counties are already providing rapid tests to travelers and have the facilities and know-how to execute this.

For these reasons, Waikiki Resort Hotel strongly supports House Bill 1286

February 9, 2021

To: Committee Pandemic & Disaster Preparedness
Committee Labor & Tourism

Fr: Jackie Reed
CEO, T S Restaurants

Re: Testimony House Bill 1286

Chair Ichiyama, Chair Onishi and member of the Committees,

Thank you for your steadfastness in protecting Hawaii during these extraordinary times. I recognize the enormity of the responsibility you carry, especially during a pandemic. I am grateful for your continued work to ensure the protection and sustainability of Hawaii's people and economy.

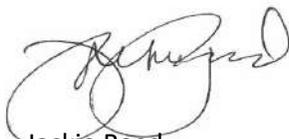
T S Restaurants was proudly founded in Hawaii in 1977. For the past 44 years, the company has grown and currently operates 13 restaurants; 8 of which are in Hawaii on the islands of Maui, Kauai and Oahu. Prepandemic, our restaurants proudly employed over 1,500 people throughout Hawaii with an additional 900 in California.

As you well know, the restaurant industry has been devastated by the coronavirus pandemic. Within our family of restaurants, we went from a proud T S 'ohana of almost 2,500 to only 10 employees actively working in April 2020. Like many in the hospitality industry, we had months of \$0 revenue in 2020. We began our slow climb to recovery, but we still have a long way to go to recoup the millions of dollars in losses and the 65% revenue reduction in 2020.

Now, more than ever, we rely on our lawmakers to assist us in our recovery. We support and uphold all measures that will keep our employees, communities and guests safe. We have adjusted our business, reorganized our facility and implemented technology, policies and safety protocol to make our restaurants safer for all. Still, we hear time and time again that the varying testing requirements between counties is confusing and an obstacle for travelers. Therefore, we humbly ask for your help.

We want and need healthy travelers to be able to come to Hawaii in order to rebuild our tourism industry in a responsible way. We advocate for a clear, state-wide policy for testing all travelers to Hawaii. We also advocate for the option for travelers to take a rapid test at the airport if the pre-travel test results are delayed. These important initiatives are laid out in House Bill 1286 which we support for the aforementioned reasons.

Mahalo for your time and attention to this critical matter.



Jackie Reed
CEO, T S Restaurants

LATE

HB-1286

Submitted on: 2/8/2021 11:03:23 PM

Testimony for PDP on 2/9/2021 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
melissa vela	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

This bill while well intentioned can have huge unintended consequences.

- 1) We have new more contagious variants now in our state. If these variants spread and increase like they have elsewhere we may need to quickly pivot and change our travel protocol because our communities and hospitals are overwhelmed. This will hinder our ability to act quickly if our communities get inundated with a new more dangerous variant.
- 2) This bill treats all islands as if they are equal. This is unfair to the neighbor islands. All the neighbor islands have different levels of available medical infrastructure, different amounts of tourism, different budgets, and different school situations. I am on the island of Maui and very concerned.
 - a) Maui families have been very much harmed by the "Safe Travels" program. Our schools were in the green on DOH school metrics (in person school) for all of October now we have been in purple for over a month (learning from home).
 - b) Maui's cases per population is now equal to Portland, OR so the Safe Travels program is NOT working for Maui.
 - c) Maui hospital is strained and full regularly. It can quickly be completely overwhelmed which will cause people to unnecessarily die. This program can completely devastate our island if our hospital gets overwhelmed because there is no way to put on the breaks.
- 3) There are other plans that could allow tourism and keep residents safer. I would be happy to send some to you. If the whole state is going to adopt a plan it should be one that all the counties would be glad to adopt. The neighbor counties have all rejected the current program which is why there are different requirements. The Safe Travel program is not considered safe enough for counties with limited resources. It is not right to force a less safe plan onto counties without their consent. It is very Oahu-centric and very oppressive towards "neighbor" islands. This plan does not have aloha and is not very neighborly.

a) One plan that is widely supported as a better protocol by many renowned experts in Hawaii is the "Safer Travel" plan. It can be found here: <https://halehawaii.cc/safertravels> (I would be more than happy to explain it.)

b) Maybe this or a similar Safer program would be more acceptable to neighbor counties and would be voluntarily adopted.

c) Please consider the message this bill sends to neighbor counties. It sends a loud and clear message that residents in neighbor counties and our voices do not matter. This bill's purpose is to take apart plans and protocols that were painstakingly put together by counties despite opposition on all sides of the COVID-19 debate. The Safe Travels plan was considered and rejected by neighbor counties. To force more cases of COVID19 onto the neighbor counties with no ability to locally put on the brakes is very authoritarian and unethical. It will cause division and non-reversible resentment towards visitors and Oahu. Forcing counties to follow a plan that is already failing in Maui and widely rejected in Kauai and Hawai'i is not pono.

d) Our county Mayors and local DOH representatives can see what is happening on the ground here in real time and need to be able to respond to it quickly.

e) As a state we should only adopt and pursue a statewide plan that all county mayors would voluntarily gladly adopt. Otherwise we should let each county have a plan that fits their comfort level based on the local infrastructure and needs.

LATE

HB-1286

Submitted on: 2/8/2021 11:06:02 PM

Testimony for PDP on 2/9/2021 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Maria Hacker	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

Aloha, at a time when the CDC recommends to not travel, and countries that have shut their borders to travel like Australia, New Zealand & Bali have very few deaths from this virus, we should be following that model not the model that has achieved over half a million deaths. You should be thinking of ways to protect our residents health not ways to bring in more virus to all our islands. I find it baffling that you are proposing that Oahu, Kauai and the other outer islands follow the same travel rules as each other. This comes on the heels of a new variant none the less! Meanwhile Tahiti, French Polynesia is closing its borders to travel to protect their citizens from this new variant. I oppose this one size fits all approach that is headed for disaster. What is the goal here? To make it less confusing for travelers to our islands when the CDC says no to non essential travel so as to stop spreading this virus from state to state? It's interesting that Josh Green and Governor Ige approved a 10 day quarantine from the original 14 day quarantine to follow the CDC guidelines but not the guideline that states its best not to travel at this time. This is cherry picking at its very finest. This Bill is not in the best interest of the health of our island of Kauai.. I oppose this Bill and advise that Oahu should be following our lead on safe travel not vice versa. Health before commerce because with a sick community there will be no commerce.



LATE

WAIKĪKĪ IMPROVEMENT ASSOCIATION

**Testimony of Rick Egged
Waikīkī Improvement Association**

Before the

Committee on Pandemic & Disaster Preparedness

& Committee on Labor & Tourism

Tuesday, February 9, 2021. 8:30am

**In consideration, of HB 1286 Relating to Statewide Safe Travels Program Exemption;
COVID-19; Quarantine**

Aloha Chair Ichiyama, Chair Onishi and member of the Committees,

My name is Rick Egged, President of the Waikīkī Improvement Association (WIA). The WIA is a membership organization consisting of landowners, hotels, retailers and restaurants in Waikīkī, the businesses that serve them and those interested in the future of this important part of our community and economy.

WIA strongly supports House Bill 1286. WIA supports the adoption of statewide travel rules as they pertain to the COVID-19 pandemic and the Safe Travels program. While we recognize the importance of “home rule” and allowing the county mayors to decide what is best for their communities, the lack of cohesion in rules for travelers and returning residents to Hawai‘i has led to significant confusion, further harming an industry already suffering an unprecedented economic downturn.

A recent special study issued by the Hawai‘i Tourism Authority indicated that the single most prevalent reason that stopped travelers from visiting Hawai‘i was that testing requirements were unreasonable. Moreover, the same study indicated that 21% of respondents had trouble sourcing a COVID-19 test from a Trusted Partner and 46% felt that the 72-hour window was troublesome. What was once perception has now become reality. The Washington Post recently ran an article titled “Hawaii wants tourists. Tourists want Hawaii. But the rules are complicated,” which highlighted that our convoluted rules are serving as a deterrent to prospective visitors who are finding themselves navigating confusing requirements for both travel to the state and within the counties. WIA is a strong proponent of a clear, statewide policy that provides clarity and simplicity for healthy travelers to come to Hawai‘i. We have also been urging our local government to provide travelers with the option to take a second, rapid COVID-19 test upon arrival should they not receive their pre-arrival test result in time. The State has the tests and facilities needed to make this possible, and we also know that two counties are already providing rapid tests to travelers and have the facilities and know-how to execute this. For these reasons, WIA strongly supports House Bill 1286.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

Rick Egged



WAIKĪKĪ IMPROVEMENT ASSOCIATION

President of Waikiki Improvement Association

LATE

HB-1286

Submitted on: 2/8/2021 11:21:24 PM

Testimony for PDP on 2/9/2021 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Karri Ayasanonda	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

I oppose HB1286.

From the beginning, the safe travels program has gone against what is needed to keep the people of Hawaii and visitors safe. Quarantines cannot be enforced, mask mandates and social distancing are largely not followed, especially in the tourist areas. On Maui we have large amounts of visitors who are coming because they are finding cheap airfare and accommodations at discounted vacation rentals. These are people coming for a bargain vacation and not people who are not interested in safety, mask wearing, or following quarantine. Maui has been overwhelmed with these irresponsible visitors and then we are given an inadequate supply of vaccine. Allowing persons to test out of quarantine only invites more people to travel potentially positive for Covid, then they may infect others during that travel. We still do not have enough resources to enforce that quarantine. Maui was never capable of enforcement of the quarantine and does not enforce mask wearing. Our hospital has been running at high census for weeks with patients waiting 48 hours for beds and spilling out of the Emergency Room. We do not know how we will be affected by the variants and the people of Maui have largely not been vaccinated. This Bill does not support safe travel and it is not time to loosen restrictions.

LATE

HB-1286

Submitted on: 2/8/2021 11:24:28 PM

Testimony for PDP on 2/9/2021 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Vijak Ayasanonda	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

As a frontline healthcare worker, I am very opposed to this bill. I work as the Chairman and ED Director of Maui Memorial Hospital and have encountered too many cases where pre testing has failed. I have also witnessed the lack of mask enforcement and education as well as the disregard for any civil cooperation directly from out of state visitors to prevent spread of COVID 19 in our islands. As you well know, we have extremely limited resources and I am witness to days where ED volume exceeds capacity. We have managed to maintain patient safety, but should this bill pass, it will open the door to enough spread of COVID 19 that will force all of us into another lock down. Trying to fast track a return to "normalcy" and tourism will only serve to delay that which you are trying to achieve. The virus is the economy. The virus dictates the timeline. Do not pass this bill. By looking at other destination locations around the world, you can easily see the same attempts to open up and pre test have failed and brought the same lock downs we are trying to prevent. We should be working to strengthen the enforcement of quarantine, mask wearing and close existing loopholes such as current "exemptions" not loosen the restrictions.

LATE

COURTYARD

BY MARRIOTT

Testimony of
Toleafoa Dave Betham
General Manager
Courtyard by Marriott Oahu North Shore

Committee Pandemic & Disaster Preparedness
Committee on Labor & Tourism

House Bill 1286: Relating to Statewide Safe Travels Program Exemption; COVID-19; Quarantine Chair Ichiyama, Chair Onishi, and members of the Committees, mahalo for the opportunity to submit testimony on behalf of the Courtyard by Marriott Oahu North Shore, its Management, Ownership and associates. Proudly one of only two hotels that provide service to those wanting to stay on Oahu's North Shore. Our Hotel is a member of the Hawaii Lodging & Tourism Association the largest private sector visitor industry organization.

We support House Bill 1286. It provides clear guidance for those guests who choose to enjoy the beauty of our people and islands. The bill allows our travelers peace of mind, through the travel process, by allowing a contingency of a rapid test should test results not be available upon arrival to Hawaii.

We support Mufi Hanneman in his testimony in favor of HB 1286. In his testimony he clearly points out why we need to remove negative perceptions stemming from complicated rules associated with coming to our islands. In working with many of our key Travel partners to reestablish travel and build business for 2021. We are saddened to hear from those partners, that Hawaii business is going to other destinations such as Mexico and the Caribbean. These international destinations are taking proper precautions to protect their guests from the Covid-19 Pandemic, yet have far simpler travel policies than Hawaii. The uncertainty caused by differing county programs along with complicated rules and processes are teaching our guests to book other destinations.

House Bill 1286, provides a clear and simple message to our guests. It restores their faith in travel to Hawaii. When our guests return, so will our many friends who have been sidelined by this depressed economy.

For these reasons we are in support of House Bill 1286.

Thank you for allowing me to testify for myself and hotel team.

Courtyard by Marriott® Oahu
North Shore 55-400
Kamehameha Highway
Laie, HI 96762
808.293.4900

Operated under a license agreement from Marriott International, Inc.

[courtyard.com](https://www.courtyard.com)

LATE

HB-1286

Submitted on: 2/9/2021 12:33:27 AM

Testimony for PDP on 2/9/2021 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Jared Higashi	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Chair Ichiyama, Chair Onishi, members of the Committees, thank you for allowing me this opportunity to express my support for House Bill 1286.

As the Vice President of Government & Community Affairs at the Hawaii Lodging & Tourism Association, I have watched the pandemic unfold firsthand. Though our hospitality industry has endured months of economic strife, I, like many, was optimistic when travel to our islands began again in earnest. Unfortunately, in the months since, we have watched as ambiguity in our travel rules and regulations have turned numerous visitors away from our islands for other premier destinations with travel mandates that are easier to understand and navigate.

We can all agree that tourism is critical to our economic recovery. We must begin to restore consistent visitor arrival numbers in order to create a level of sustainability for our local hotels, restaurants, retail outlets, and small businesses. However, in order to accomplish this we must first overcome the issues that have arisen from the Safe Travels program which allows the various counties to set their own policies. The lack of a clear, statewide rule is hurting our industry, our economy, and our community. Establishing a statewide policy would be an important first step to bringing healthy visitors back to our shores in a meaningful way.

Additionally, I also support the provision in HB1286 which clarifies that visitors who end up testing positive while in Hawai'i are ultimately responsible for securing and paying for all arrangements related to their quarantine and isolation periods. This is a part of the traveler's responsibility and should not be a burden shouldered by the private sector or our local governments.

For these reasons I am testifying in strong support of House Bill 1286.

Mahalo.

LATE

HB-1286

Submitted on: 2/9/2021 3:13:17 AM

Testimony for PDP on 2/9/2021 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Meredith Miller	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

This bill while well intentioned can have huge unintended consequences.

- 1) We have new more contagious variants now in our state. If these variants spread and increase like they have elsewhere we may need to quickly pivot and change our travel protocol because our communities and hospitals are overwhelmed. This will hinder our ability to act quickly if our communities get inundated with a new more dangerous variant.
- 2) This bill treats all islands as if they are equal. This is unfair to the neighbor islands. All the neighbor islands have different levels of available medical infrastructure, different amounts of tourism, different budgets, and different school situations. I am on the island of Maui and very concerned.
 - a) Maui families have been very much harmed by the "Safe Travels" program. Our schools were in the green on DOH school metrics (in person school) for all of October now we have been in purple for over a month (learning from home).
 - b) Maui's cases per population is now equal to Portland, OR so the Safe Travels program is NOT working for Maui.
 - c) Maui hospital is strained and full regularly. It can quickly be completely overwhelmed which will cause people to unnecessarily die. This program can completely devastate our island if our hospital gets overwhelmed because there is no way to put on the breaks.
- 3) There are other plans that could allow tourism and keep residents safer. I would be happy to send some to you. If the whole state is going to adopt a plan it should be one that all the counties would be glad to adopt. The neighbor counties have all rejected the current program which is why there are different requirements. The Safe Travel program is not considered safe enough for counties with limited resources. It is not right to force a less safe plan onto counties without their consent. It is very Oahu-centric and very oppressive towards "neighbor" islands. This plan does not have aloha and is not very neighborly.

- a) One plan that is widely supported as a better protocol by many renowned experts in Hawaii is the "Safer Travel" plan. It can be found here: <https://halehawaii.cc/safertravels> (I would be more than happy to explain it.)
- b) Maybe this or a similar Safer program would be more acceptable to neighbor counties and would be voluntarily adopted.
- c) Please consider the message this bill sends to neighbor counties. It sends a loud and clear message that residents in neighbor counties and our voices do not matter. This bill's purpose is to take apart plans and protocols that were painstakingly put together by counties despite opposition on all sides of the COVID-19 debate. The Safe Travels plan was considered and rejected by neighbor counties. To force more cases of COVID19 onto the neighbor counties with no ability to locally put on the brakes is very authoritarian and unethical. It will cause division and non-reversible resentment towards visitors and Oahu. Forcing counties to follow a plan that is already failing in Maui and widely rejected in Kauai and Hawai'i is not pono.
- d) Our county Mayors and local DOH representatives can see what is happening on the ground here in real time and need to be able to respond to it quickly.
- e) As a state we should only adopt and pursue a statewide plan that all county mayors would voluntarily gladly adopt. Otherwise we should let each county have a plan that fits their comfort level based on the local infrastructure and needs.

LATE

Testimony of

Steve Yannarell
General Manager

Waikoloa Beach Marriott Resort and Ocean Club

Committee Pandemic & Disaster Preparedness
Committee on Labor & Tourism

House Bill 1286: Relating to Statewide Safe Travels Program Exemption; COVID-19;
Quarantine

Chair Ichiyama, Chair Onishi, and members of the Committees, mahalo for the opportunity to submit testimony on behalf of the Waikoloa Beach Marriott Resort and Spa, a mixed use facility with 300 hotel rooms and 112 Marriott Vacation Club suites located along the beautiful Kohala Coast of Hawaii Island. We employ over 300 associates from across the island and are a member of the Hawaii Lodging and Tourism Association the largest private sector visitor industry organization in the state with 700 members, 170 of which are hotels managing 51,000 rooms and nearly 40,000 hotel associates.

The industry has long advocated for the adoption of statewide travel rules as they pertain to the COVID-19 pandemic and the Safe Travels program. While we recognize the importance of “home rule” and allowing the county mayors to decide what is best for their communities, the lack of cohesion in rules for travelers and returning residents to Hawai‘i has led to significant confusion, further harming an industry already suffering an unprecedented economic downturn. As such, I strongly support House Bill 1286.

A recent special study issued by the Hawai‘i Tourism Authority indicated that the single most prevalent reason that stopped travelers from visiting Hawai‘i was that testing requirements were unreasonable. Moreover, the same study indicated that 21% of respondents had trouble sourcing a COVID-19 test from a Trusted Partner and 46% felt that the 72-hour window was troublesome. What was once perception has now become reality. The Washington Post recently ran an article titled “Hawaii wants tourists. Tourists want Hawaii. But the rules are complicated,” which highlighted that our convoluted rules are serving as a deterrent to prospective visitors who are finding themselves navigating confusing requirements for both travel to the state and within the counties. We need a clear statewide policy that provides clarity and simplicity for healthy travelers to come to Hawai‘i. We have also been urging our local government to provide travelers with the option to take a second, rapid COVID-19 test upon arrival should they not receive their pre-arrival test result in time. The State has the tests and facilities needed to make this possible, and we also know that two counties are already providing rapid tests to travelers and have the facilities and know-how to execute this.

For these reasons, I would strongly support House Bill 1286.

Thank you for the opportunity to offer this testimony.

LATE

HB-1286

Submitted on: 2/9/2021 6:27:00 AM

Testimony for PDP on 2/9/2021 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
ELEANOR LEIALOHA	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

I do not support this one size fits all Bill as we on the outer islands don't fit. I am on the island of Maui and we have one hospital that is usually filled or at capacity. We have a high infection rate of Covid-19 for our population. We have no where to go if the numbers keep rising. Our County doesn't support this Bill nor does the other islands but why is it always Oahu first in all things? Oahu has the infrastructure to handle large numbers of Covid-19 along with the day to day emergencies that come along but we don't. We need to take a firmer stand in our response to handling this virus for our whole State not just one Island. Case in point is the new variants that are now here and from people who were probably infected by community spread from someone who traveled here with a negative test that apparently was carrying the virus!

That being said what do I believe will work is the plan outlined here: <https://halehawaii.cc/safertravels>

I would and I know that many others support this plan of a 2nd test after arrival after a mandatory quarantine of just a few days! Its not that overbearing i think. Anyone visiting here (or returning home) and has love for Hawaii should be happy to take these steps to keep our vulnerable population safe. Those that don't want to do this then should postpone their plans until a later time when the virus is better under control.

Mahalo Piha,

Eleanor Leialoha

LATE

HB-1286

Submitted on: 2/9/2021 6:31:42 AM

Testimony for PDP on 2/9/2021 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Faith Marie Harding	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

Aloha~

I live on Kauai and am extremely proud of how our Mayor, Derek Kawakami, has handled the pandemic for our little island. I've worked in public health here and one of the aspects of working in public health is creating relationships w the other islands. We are NOT the same as Oahu, Maui, Big Island and the others. Since we DO NOT participate in the Safe Travels program, I believe have saved ourselves the onslaught of COVID en masse to this island. We DO NOT have the reources that the other main islands do. I am sure you are aware of this since we had to opt out back in Oct. 2020 when the state opened back up to travellers. Please DO NOT pass this bill. I believe you, as a legislative body, will regret it and we on Kauai will have to deal with the aftermath of your decision. I implore you to let Mayor Kawakami to contiue with what is already in place for Kauai. Mahalo.



Imanaka Asato
A LIMITED LIABILITY LAW COMPANY

LATE

February 9, 2021

Representative Linda Ichiyama, Chair
Representative Stacelynn K.M. Eli, Vice-Chair
Members of the House Committee on Pandemic
& Disaster Preparedness

Representative Richard H.K. Onishi, Chair
Representative Jackson D. Sayama, Vice-Chair
Members of the House Committee on Labor
& Tourism
Thirty-First Legislature, Regular Session of 2021

RE: HB 1286 – RELATING TO TRAVEL
Hearing Date: February 9, 2021 at 8:30 A.m.

Aloha Chair Ichiyama, Chair Onishi and members of the committees,

Mahalo for the opportunity to submit testimony in **SUPPORT** of House Bill 1286 – Relating to Travel. Currently, there is significant confusion on the rules for travelers to Hawaii, including returning local residents. This bill establishes statewide standard travel rules as they relate to the COVID-19 pandemic. Consistent, statewide rules are critical to help healthy travelers return to Hawaii and help restart our economy. For these reasons I strongly urge you to pass House Bill 1286.

Very truly yours,

IMANAKA ASATO

Michael L. Iosua

LATE

HB-1286

Submitted on: 2/9/2021 7:17:17 AM

Testimony for PDP on 2/9/2021 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Ike Cockett	Maui Seaside Hotel	Support	No

Comments:

The Maui Seaside Hotel, like many of our industry colleagues has experienced unprecedented financial hardship due to the pandemic. A year ago the Maui Seaside Hotel employed 65 team members. Today we employ 19. HB1286 would streamline and coordinate testing guidelines making it "user friendly" for those whom wish to travel to our beautiful state of Hawaii while maintaining recommended safe guidelines. For these reasons, Maui Seaside Hotel supports HB1286.
Thank you for the opportunity to offer testimony.

**E M B A S S Y
S U I T E S**
by HILTON™

Waikiki Beach Walk®

Testimony of
Simeon Miranda
General Manager
Embassy Suites by Hilton Waikiki Beach Walk

Committee Pandemic & Disaster Preparedness
Committee on Labor & Tourism

House Bill 1286: Relating to Statewide Safe Travels Program Exemption; COVID-19; Quarantine

Chair Ichiyama, Chair Onishi, and members of the Committees, mahalo for the opportunity to submit testimony on behalf of the Hawai‘i Lodging & Tourism Association, the state’s largest private sector visitor industry organization.

The Hawai‘i Lodging & Tourism Association—nearly 700 members strong, representing more than 50,000 hotel rooms and nearly 40,000 lodging workers —has long advocated for the adoption of statewide travel rules as they pertain to the COVID-19 pandemic and the Safe Travels program. While we recognize the importance of “home rule” and allowing the county mayors to decide what is best for their communities, the lack of cohesion in rules for travelers and returning residents to Hawai‘i has led to significant confusion, further harming an industry already suffering an unprecedented economic downturn. As such, HLTA strongly supports House Bill 1286.

A recent special study issued by the Hawai‘i Tourism Authority indicated that the single most prevalent reason that stopped travelers from visiting Hawai‘i was that testing requirements were unreasonable. Moreover, the same study indicated that 21% of respondents had trouble sourcing a COVID-19 test from a Trusted Partner and 46% felt that the 72-hour window was troublesome. What was once perception has now become reality. The Washington Post recently ran an article titled “Hawaii wants tourists. Tourists want Hawaii. But the rules are complicated,” which highlighted that our convoluted rules are serving as a deterrent to prospective visitors who are finding themselves navigating confusing requirements for both travel to the state and within the counties. HLTA has been a strong proponent of a clear, statewide policy that provides clarity and simplicity for healthy travelers to come to Hawai‘i. We have also been urging our local government to provide travelers with the option to take a second, rapid COVID-19 test upon arrival should they not receive their pre-arrival test result in time. The State has the tests and facilities needed to make this possible, and we also know that two counties are already providing rapid tests to travelers and have the facilities and know-how to execute this.

For these reasons, Embassy Suites by Hilton Waikiki Beach Walk strongly supports House Bill 1286.

Thank you for the opportunity to offer this testimony.

HB-1286

Submitted on: 2/9/2021 7:58:19 AM

Testimony for PDP on 2/9/2021 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Robert C Friedl	The Laylow	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha,

based on speaking with our guests and clients and many friends, a recent study issued by the HTA as well as an article published by the Washington post, it appears that most travelers are deterred from travelling to Hawaii due to the unreasonable and confusing testing requirements and rules.

We are supporting a clear, statewide policy to simplify and clarify healthy travels to Hawaii as well as providing an option to travelers to take a second, rapid COVID-19 test upon arrival in case they have not received their pre-arrival test results in time.

Therefor we strongly support House Bill 1286.

Mahalo for your consideration,

Robert C. Friedl

General Manager

The Laylow



February 2, 2021

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HOUSE BILL 1286

RELATING TO STATEWIDE SAFE TRAVELS PROGRAM EXEMPTION; COVID-19; QUARANTINE

Aloha Chair Ichiyama, Chair Onishi, and members of the Committees,

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in support of House Bill 1286. My name is Jason Ito, Vice President, Administration, Labor & Community Relations for Kyo-ya Management Company, Ltd.

We support a consistent and easy to understand process for travelers considering Hawaii as their destination of choice. Travelers must feel confident that their investment of time will result in a successful and satisfying time in the islands. A consistent and clear travel protocol will help to restart the island economy through an industry which affects many people and so many inter-related jobs throughout the state of Hawaii.

Our responsibility as business and community leaders is to create and support good jobs and long term employment ensuring that our local communities and families have the opportunity for a thriving and vibrant future. This measure will help to ensure a successful re-opening.

Mahalo for the opportunity to submit our testimony. We urge you to SUPPORT House Bill 1286.

Sincerely,

Jason Ito