

RES25-048
Testimony

MISC. COMM. 158

COUNCIL

COUNCIL Meeting

Meeting Date: Mar 19, 2025 @ 10:00 AM

Support: 4

Oppose: 1

I wish to comment: 0

Name: Karen Luke	Email: nahele@yahoo.com	Zip: 96706
Representing: Self	Position: Oppose	Submitted: Mar 14, 2025 @ 12:06 AM
Testimony: Aloha Chair Waters, VC Weyer, and Members of City Council, I oppose Reso 25-48. Respect for Native Hawaiian culture and values goes beyond collaboration/collaborating with the island's diverse stakeholders, especially Native Hawaiians to write a plan. Culturally-aligned tourism practices encourages/allows/regulates participating in housing/accommodating/renting to visitors/tourists/travelers. This bill speaks naught for the people of the aina--residential property owners. It just develops another cog in the wheel writing up another pie in the sky report by a new employee with the title "Regenerative Tourism Program Manager." Shouldn't HVCB be working on such a plan instead of encouraging someone else to do it? Thank you for allowing me to voice my opinion. I honestly hope this sways you. Mahalo for your time. Aloha, Karen in Ewa Beach		
Name: Kelly Lee	Email: kellyreports@gmail.com	Zip: 96734
Representing: Oahu Short Term Rental Alliance	Position: Support	Submitted: Mar 14, 2025 @ 02:25 PM
Name: Madelyn McKeague	Email: madelyn@hawaiiancouncil.org	Zip: 96707
Representing: Council for Native Hawaiian Advancement	Position: Support	Submitted: Mar 18, 2025 @ 03:38 PM
Name: Brandon Fairchild	Email: brandon@sphawaii.com	Zip: 96817
Representing: Solutions Pacific	Position: Support	Submitted: Mar 18, 2025 @ 09:44 PM
Name: Rebecca Soon	Email: bsoon@wardresearch.com	Zip: 96817
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:



Honolulu City Council
March 14, 2025

Re: Support RES25-048, CD-1

Aloha Chair Waters, Vice Chair Weyer and Council Members,

OSTRA is a non-profit organization representing over 10,000 legal short-term rental units on Oahu, including independently owned hotel units, registered transient vacation units, and other legally operating mid- and short-term rentals. Our membership also includes property managers, cleaners, and numerous other small businesses that rely on our industry for their livelihoods. Importantly, nearly 80% of our rental owners are also residents of Oahu, demonstrating our deep commitment to protecting the quality of life in our communities.

OSTRA strongly supports the adoption of Resolution 25-048 CD1, which calls for the creation of a comprehensive O'ahu Tourism Strategic Plan. We believe this plan is essential for the sustainable and responsible management of tourism on Oahu.

We particularly appreciate the resolution's emphasis on developing the plan with the full participation of diverse stakeholders, including non-profit organizations. OSTRA is uniquely positioned to contribute to this process. As the leading source of information on short-term rentals on Oahu, and with access to data from our alliance relationships across the Hawaiian Islands, we possess valuable insights into the dynamics of this critical sector of the tourism industry.

OSTRA has consistently demonstrated its commitment to responsible operations and regulatory compliance. We have been instrumental in working with the Department of Planning and Permitting (DPP) to ensure that our members adhere to all applicable laws and regulations.

We respectfully request that OSTRA be granted a formal seat at the table during the development of this strategic plan. Our organization is ready to provide data, insights, and recommendations that will help ensure the plan is balanced, effective, and beneficial for all stakeholders.

We commend the Council for its leadership in addressing the challenges and opportunities facing Oahu's tourism industry and appreciate your consideration.

Mahalo,

Kelly Lee

Kelly Lee
President & Executive Director
O'ahu Short Term Rental Alliance (OSTRA)

**Council for Native Hawaiian Advancement
91-1270 Kionoiki St., Bldg. 1
Kapolei, HI 96707**

Honolulu City Council

**Resolution 25-48 – Urging the City Administration to Create
an O‘ahu Tourism Strategic Plan**

RE: Strong support of Resolution 25-048, CD-1

March 19, 2025

The Council for Native Hawaiian Advancement (CNHA) writes in **strong support of Resolution 25-048**, urging the City to create an O‘ahu Tourism Strategic Plan that prioritizes regenerative and sustainable tourism, respect for Native Hawaiian culture and values, the integration of emerging technologies, and forward-thinking economic strategies.

The tourism industry is an enormous component of Hawai‘i’s economy. This year’s DBEDT’s Quarterly Tourism Forecast reported \$21.34 billion in visitor spending alone. O‘ahu alone, in 2023, received 5.6 million visitors, which contributed \$9.0 billion in spending. The current model of tourism places strain on our natural resources and local communities. This resolution recognizes the need to shift towards a more sustainable and regenerative tourism framework that aligns with Native Hawaiian values such as mālama (care and stewardship), kuleana (responsibility), and pono (ethical balance).

It is critical for the tourism industry to become significantly more sustainable, respectful, and responsible towards the ‘āina and its people. It is important to integrate Native Hawaiian cultural values into tourism planning to ensure that the economic benefits of tourism do not come at the expense of environmental degradation or cultural exploitation. By prioritizing regenerative tourism, O‘ahu has the opportunity to create a tourism model that actively restores and revitalizes our natural and cultural resources, rather than merely sustaining them.

Resolution 25-048, CD-1 calls for developing a more sustainable tourism industry in collaboration with diverse stakeholders, including Native Hawaiians, local communities, non-profit organizations, and government agencies. This collaborative approach is essential to ensure that the plan reflects the needs and values of our communities and aligns with broader economic diversification efforts.

For these reasons, we humbly ask that you **PASS Resolution 25-048 CD-1**, to prioritize regenerative and sustainable tourism that respects Native Hawaiian culture and values and ensures a prosperous future for our ‘āina and people.

Me ka ha‘aha‘a,

Madelyn McKeague
Director of Advocacy, CNHA



RE: **RESOLUTION 24-048**

Urging the City Administration to Create an O‘ahu Tourism Strategic Plan

Aloha e Chair Waters and Members of the Honolulu City Council:

I am pleased to submit testimony in strong support of creating a Tourism Strategic Plan for O‘ahu.

Together with Kilohana and the Council for Native Hawaiian Advancement, our company worked over the past two years with the Hawai‘i Tourism Authority to design and administer programs focused on regenerative tourism in Hawai‘i. Through these programs, we supported capacity building for a number of O‘ahu-based organizations engaged in reinvesting in local communities, protecting cultural and natural resources, and creating authentic, place-based experiences for our visitors. A number of them are working to manage and support hotspots, impacted by heavy traffic from our visitors, and others have built opportunities that bring together our malihini and kama‘āina for a deeply enriching experience.

We have learned much through these organizations, and chief among them are that there are great resources in our communities with ideas and strategies if we invest in them. The development of an O‘ahu Tourism Strategic Plan presents an opportunity to build on the work of the organizations within our communities and the Destination Management Action Plans. With intentional efforts, O‘ahu can be a global leader in regenerative tourism, attracting mindful travelers - those who respect Hawai‘i and our heritage, support local, and engage in enriching, reciprocal experiences.

A coordinated and strategic approach could help:

- Strengthen visitor experiences that celebrate O‘ahu’s cultural and environmental heritage.
- Enhance support for local businesses, keeping tourism dollars within the local economy.
- Improve management of tourism hotspots by supporting stewardship organizations and implementing managed access, visitor education, and place-based stewardship models.
- Foster collaboration across sectors to align tourism with community needs and values.

An O‘ahu Tourism Strategic Plan presents an exciting opportunity to elevate regenerative tourism for positive, lasting impact for O‘ahu. We also support OER’s request for funding to support the development of a meaningful plan. Mahalo for the opportunity to support this measure.

Brandon M. Fairchild, TACB Program Coordinator
www.RegenerativeTourismHawaii.INFO



RE: **SUPPORT for Resolution 25-048**
Urging the City Administration to Create an O‘ahu Tourism Strategic Plan.

Aloha nui e Chair Waters and Members of the Honolulu City Council:

Our team is pleased to submit written testimony in strong support of creating a **Tourism Strategic Plan for O‘ahu**.

In April 2024, Ward Research published a [Visitor Industry Needs Assessment for the Hawai‘i Tourism Authority](#). 921 business and non-profit organizations working within, or looking to expand within, the visitor industry provided in-depth insight into their goals, barriers, and opportunities to invest to support a more economically, culturally, and ecologically regenerative visitor industry. Areas where respondents indicated the most potential for opportunity included:

- **Workforce Development:** Both within traditional industry roles as well as within conservation, cultural & historical, agricultural, and ‘āina-based work that drives regenerative experiences.
- **Education and Marketing for Local Businesses:** Focusing on small and local businesses increase the economic impact within the county while allowing local talent to lead.
- **Capacity Building for Voluntourism:** Visitor Sentiment research has identified interest in more voluntourism opportunities. Many groups have programs or are ready to support programs with proper infrastructure investment that mutually supports the community and the visitor industry.

The Office of Economic Revitalization has demonstrated a meaningful commitment to supporting O‘ahu’s local businesses and investing in strategic partnership with the visitor industry. A tourism strategic plan can help to support that work, complement the O‘ahu Destination Management Action Plan, and similar to other counties, provide a strategic direction for the county and effective deployment of resources into the industry well into the future.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify in support of this resolution and continue forward-looking plan development.

Rebecca J. ‘I. Soon, President
Ward Research, Inc.