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March 29, 2017

TO: The Honorable Sylvia Luke, Chair
House Committee on Finance

FROM: Mike White
Council Chair

Handwritten signature of Mike White in black ink.

SUBJECT: **HEARING OF MARCH 30, 2017; TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SB 658, SD 2, HD 2, RELATING TO AN AIRPORT CORPORATION**

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in **support** of this measure. This bill authorizes the establishment of the Hawaii Airport Corporation, which consolidates jurisdiction over the State's airport infrastructure into a single entity.

The Maui County Council has not had the opportunity to take a formal position on this matter. Therefore, I am providing this testimony in my capacity as an individual member of the Council.

I **support** this measure for the following reasons:

1. The Kahului Airport on Maui is undergoing major upgrades with a consolidated rent-a-car facility currently under construction and a new access road which opened for motorists on July 23, 2016. A more streamlined, coordinated body such as the Hawaii Airport Corporation may help to complete complicated projects and on-going maintenance in a more efficient manner without having to coordinate with numerous jurisdictions.
2. I recently read an article in The Honolulu Star Advertiser ("Attempt to build airport facility delays dependent upgrades," March 22) relating to the modernization efforts at the Honolulu International Airport. It cited numerous delays with planning, contracting, and construction caused by State requirements and compounded by challenges with a general contractor. The time has come to at least try a new approach. This new model can provide focus and efficiency when improving our outdated airports and support facilities, especially on the neighbor islands.
3. The State Department of Transportation plays numerous roles with many constituencies, spanning from harbors to roadways. A single entity with a consolidated jurisdiction will be able to solely focus on operations and long-term planning for our airports. The authority will also allow for community input, while complementing other efforts to revitalize and promote Hawaii's economy.
4. Airports are the first and last impression visitors see of Hawaii, and a positive impression is critical for our long-term success as an international destination. It is vital for us to make the necessary structural changes to emphasize the importance of these values, especially when no general fund monies are used.

Mahalo for your consideration.

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