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**Testimony of KAREN EWALD, Executive Director
State Foundation on Culture and the Arts
Before the
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE
THURSDAY, MARCH 27, 2025 Conference Room 308 at 2:00PM
SENATE BILL 441 SD1 HD1
RELATING TO THE HAWAII SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA**

Chair Yamashita and members of the Committee,

The State Foundation on Culture and the Arts (SFCA), is pleased to offer

COMMENTS on S.B.441 SD1 HD1 which Designates the Hawai'i Symphony Orchestra as the State of Hawai'i Symphony Orchestra. Requires annual reports to the Legislature. Appropriation.

The performing arts in Hawaii are a vital part of our community and currently receive SFCA support through General Fund appropriations from the legislature and Federal funding from the National Endowment for the Arts. Performing Arts, including cultural presentations, represent 43% of total Biennium Grants awards and 72% of total Artists in the Schools projects. Music and music education are an important part of the cultural landscape. Hawaii, in the center of the Pacific Ocean is blessed with a variety of musical traditions. The Hawaii Symphony Orchestra represents the finest in the orchestral tradition in Hawaii, serving the public and schools statewide.

The Hawaii Symphony Orchestra regularly receives state funds in the form of grants from the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts, Grants in Aid from the Hawaii legislature and quarterly dividends from State funds in the Hawaii Symphony Endowment fund.

The Hawaii Legislature has appropriated millions of dollars to the State of Hawaii Endowment fund to support the Honolulu Symphony Orchestra, now known as the Hawaii Symphony Orchestra. The grants were to provide regular State support and required the fund be matched with private funds with annual dividends supporting the Hawaii Symphony Orchestra. Should the legislature appropriate funds to the Hawaii Symphony Orchestra, the SFCA recommends the funds go to the endowment.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on this measure.

SB-441-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/25/2025 7:45:29 AM

Testimony for FIN on 3/27/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Michael Golojuch, Jr. (he/him)	Pride at Work – Hawai‘i	Support	Remotely Via Zoom

Comments:

Aloha Representatives,

Pride at Work – Hawai‘i is an official chapter of [Pride at Work](#) which is a national nonprofit organization that represents LGBTQIA+ union members and their allies. We are an officially recognized constituency group of the AFL-CIO that organizes mutual support between the organized Labor Movement and the LGBTQIA+ Community to further social and economic justice.

Pride at Work – Hawai‘i fully supports SB 441 SD 1 HD 1.

We ask that you support this needed piece of legislation.

Mahalo,

Michael Golojuch, Jr. (he/him)

President

[Pride at Work – Hawai‘i](#)



ABC Stores
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Honolulu, Hawaii 96813-5391
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March 24, 2025

Chair Kyle T. Yamashita
Vice Chair Jenna Takenouchi
House Committee on Finance
Thursday, March 27, 2025
House Conference Room 308 at 2:00PM.

Re: SB 441 SD1 HD1 Relating to the Hawaii Symphony Orchestra

Aloha Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Takenouchi, and Members of the Committee. My name is John Mark Mageo, Employee Relations and Government Affairs Manager of ABC Stores. ABC Stores employs over 2,200 residents across Hawaii, Las Vegas, Guam, and Saipan.

On behalf of ABC Stores, we would like to express our strong support for SB 441 SD1 HD1, a bill that designates the Hawaii Symphony Orchestra as the State of Hawaii Symphony Orchestra; requires annual reports to the Legislature; and Appropriates funds.

The Hawaii Symphony Orchestra is not just a cultural treasure; it is a vital institution that enriches the lives of residents and visitors alike. Through its diverse programming, educational outreach, and community engagement, the HSO fosters a deep appreciation for the arts and provides opportunities for people of all ages to experience the transformative power of music.

SB 441 SD1 HD1 is crucial for ensuring the continued success and sustainability of the HSO. The funding provided by this bill will enable the orchestra to maintain its high standards of artistic excellence, expand its educational initiatives, and reach even more members of our community throughout the Islands. Sharing live symphonic music that has been linked in numerous studies to vastly improved academic performance, better outcomes for young people, and increased social cohesion.

We urge you to pass SB 441 SD1 HD1 and ensure that the Hawaii Symphony Orchestra can continue to thrive and inspire future generations. Thank you for your consideration and for your commitment to supporting the arts in Hawaii.

Mahalo,
John Mark Mageo
Employee Relations and Government Affairs Manager
(808) 597-3312
jmageo@abcstores.com



HAWAII STATE AFL-CIO

888 Mililani Street, Suite 501 • Honolulu, Hawaii 96813
Telephone: (808) 597-1441 • Fax: (808) 593-2149

The Thirty-Third Legislature
House of Representatives
Committee on Finance

Testimony by
Hawaii State AFL-CIO

March 27, 2025

**TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SB441 SD1 HD1 – RELATING TO THE HAWAII SYMPHONY
ORCHESTRA**

Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Takenouchi, and members of the committee:

The Hawaii State AFL-CIO is a state federation of 76 affiliate labor organizations representing over 69,000 union members across Hawaii in industries including healthcare, construction, hospitality, entertainment, transportation, and government. The Hawaii State AFL-CIO serves its affiliates by advocating for the rights of working families, promoting fair wages, safe working conditions, and policies that strengthen Hawaii's workforce.

We are in support of SB441 SD1 HD1 because it recognizes the cultural and economic contributions of the Hawaii Symphony Orchestra and provides essential funding for its operations. The symphony plays a vital role in arts education, community engagement, and workforce opportunities for musicians, stagehands, and other professionals in the performing arts.

A strong symphony benefits the economy by creating stable jobs in the arts and attracting visitors who contribute to Hawaii's tourism industry. Public investment in the orchestra supports working families in the arts sector and helps sustain a vital cultural institution that has served Hawaii for generations.

We respectfully urge the committee to pass this measure, which would strengthen Hawaii's arts community and support the workers who bring music and culture to our state.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Randy Pereira".

Randy Pereira
President



HAWAI'I
SYMPHONY
ORCHESTRA

DANE LAM | MUSIC AND ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

Board of Directors

Paul J. Kosasa, Chair

*Kenneth S. Robbins,
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Peter Dames

H. Mitchell D'Olier

Richard Ing

Dr. Tyrie Lee Jenkins

Marilyn Katzman

Katie Pickman

Ginny Tiu

Jinyoung Lee Won

Lucy Xie

President & CEO

Amy Iwano

**Music & Artistic
Director**

Dane Lam

**Conductor
Emeritus**

JoAnn Falletta

Thirty-Third Legislature, State of Hawai'i

Regular Session of 2025

House Committee on Finance

Testimony by Hawai'i Symphony Orchestra

March 26, 2025

**TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SB441 – RELATING TO THE HAWAI'I
SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA**

Aloha Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Takenouchi, and Members of the Committee,

As Music and Artistic Director and President and CEO, respectively, of the Hawaii Symphony Orchestra, we request your support of **SB441 SD1, HD1**, which would designate the Hawai'i Symphony Orchestra as the State of Hawai'i Symphony Orchestra. This designation is not just symbolic—it would provide essential funding to ensure **equal access to world-class symphonic music for all residents, regardless of where they live.**

Music is not only entertainment; it helps mental health, physical health, brain development, and socialization. It teaches concentration, perseverance, listening, and working together. Music brings people together and uplifts our communities, and HSO is a community service provider.

Right now, **many communities—particularly on the neighbor islands and in areas outside of cities—have little to no access to live symphonic music.** Music education opportunities are also unevenly distributed, despite clear evidence linking exposure to the arts with improved academic and social outcomes.

SB441 SD1, HD1 would allow the Hawai'i Symphony Orchestra to:

- ✓ **Expand free public concerts statewide**
- ✓ **Enhance music education for thousands of Hawai'i's keiki**
- ✓ **Support local musicians and cultural collaborations**
- ✓ **Commission new works that reflect Hawai'i's unique heritage**

We are proud of all we offer at HSO, such as:

- More than 50 diverse concerts annually
- Free park and outdoor community concerts
- Free education concerts including Symphony of the Hawaiian Birds and Symphony of the Hawai'i Forests
- Our Na Hoku Opio - Young Stars competition that showcases the talented young Hawai'i students
- Side-by-side projects with Hawai'i Youth Symphony



HAWAI'I
SYMPHONY
ORCHESTRA

DANE LAM | MUSIC AND ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

Board of Directors

Paul J. Kosasa, Chair

*Kenneth S. Robbins,
Vice Chair*

*Jason Kravitt,
Treasurer*

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Richard Ing

Dr. Tyrie Lee Jenkins

Marilyn Katzman

Katie Pickman

Ginny Tiu

Jinyoung Lee Won

Lucy Xie

President & CEO

Amy Iwano

Music & Artistic Director

Dane Lam

Conductor Emeritus

JoAnn Falletta

- A Masterworks Series that brings the world's best music and greatest artists to Hawai'i
- Our HapaSymphony Series that combines the talents of Hawai'i's most revered musicians including Robert Cazimero, Jake Shimabukuro and Raitea Helm with the power of a symphony orchestra in full flight
- Commissioning new works by living composers from around our Pacific Region, embracing our geography as a Pacific Orchestra
- Uniting the state's most important arts organizations under one umbrella in our groundbreaking Beethoven Festival
- The musicians are our greatest asset: We employ some of the United States' finest musicians to play in the HSO. They don't only play in the orchestra, though; they also play the vital role of educating our children
- Sharing live symphonic music that has been linked in numerous studies with vastly improved academic performance, better outcomes for young people, and increased social cohesion

A **designated State Orchestra** would be a **cultural and economic asset**, supporting local jobs, driving tourism, and strengthening our communities through music. With funding from SB441 SD1, HD1, HSO could **reach more people on every island**—making the arts accessible to all.

We urge you to **pass SB441 SD1, HD1** and help make symphonic music a lasting and meaningful part of life for all Hawai'i residents.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.

Dane Lam
Music and Artistic Director

Amy Iwano
President and CEO

Schlueter, Kwiat & Kennedy

A Limited Liability Law Partnership

Michael H. Schlueter
Jason R. Kwiat
Andrew M. Kennedy
Nicole K. Bowman
Eli N. Bowman

Atrium Court • 75-167 Kalani Street, Suite 201 • Kailua-Kona, HI 96740
Tel. (808) 987-7275 • Fax (808) 443-0339 • andrew@kona-lawyer.com

March 25, 2025

House Committee On Culture & Arts
Hawai'i State Legislature

RE: SB441 SD1 HD1 – Relating to the Hawai'i Symphony Orchestra
Hearing Date: March 27, 2025, 2:00 PM

House Committee On Culture & Arts:

I write on behalf of the law firm Schlueter, Kwiat & Kennedy LLLP in support of SB441 and the Hawai'i Symphony Orchestra.

Schlueter, Kwiat & Kennedy is a law firm located on the Big Island of Hawai'i, yet we proudly support the Hawai'i Symphony Orchestra as donors and frequently attend its performances.

The Hawai'i Symphony Orchestra is a fantastic organization that puts on first class performances that our community should take pride in. Music Director and Conductor Dane Lam curates thoughtful and engaging programs. He not only showcases renowned classical masterworks but also highlights lesser known pieces and local artists, striking a meaningful balance between tradition and innovation.

These performances offer more than just entertainment - they are educational experiences. Maestro Lam frequently shares insights with the audience about the historical and cultural significance of the pieces performed, deepening the public's appreciation and understanding of the music.

SCHLUETER, KWIAT & KENNEDY LLLP

75-167 Kalani Street, Suite 201
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(808) 987-7275
fax (808) 443-0339
andrew@kona-lawyer.com

Every city should have a strong cultural and arts presence available to those who wish to engage. Honolulu and the State of Hawai'i are no exception. The Hawai'i Symphony Orchestra plays an essential role in promoting arts and culture in our community, and we strongly support its continued success and growth..

Regards,
Schlueter, Kwiat & Kennedy LLP



Andrew Kennedy



SERVCO PACIFIC INC.
2850 PUKOLOA ST. STE. 300
HONOLULU, HI 96819 USA

O. 808.564.1300
F. 808.564.1393

SERVCO.COM

Representative Kyle Yamashita, Chair
Representative Jenna Takenouchi, Vice Chair
Committee on Finance

RE: **SB 441 SD1 HD1 - Relating to the Hawaii Symphony Orchestra – In Support**
Thursday, March 27, 2025; 2:00 PM; Agenda #1
Conference room 308 & Videoconference

Aloha Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Takenouchi and members of the committee:

As a Board of Director of the Hawaii Symphony Orchestra and on-behalf of Servco Pacific, Inc., **I am writing in strong support of SB 441 SD1 HD1**, which designates the Hawaii Symphony Orchestra as the State of Hawaii Symphony Orchestra, exempts general fund appropriations to the State of Hawaii Symphony Orchestra from the requirements of chapter 42F, HRS and appropriates funds for general operating costs of the Orchestra and for deposit into the State of Hawaii Endowment Fund.

Founded in 1900, the Hawaii Symphony Orchestra (HSO) has become an integral part of our community, not only by hosting over 50 diverse concerts and programs featuring international performing artists but also by promoting local talent within Hawaii through its outreach and educational opportunities such as the Hapa Concert Series and No Hoku Opio youth competition. HSO also provides free concerts in parks, public spaces, and live streams to ensure access to all of Hawaii's residents.

By designating Hawaii Symphony Orchestra as the "State of Hawaii Symphony Orchestra," SB 441 SD1 HD1 will enable HSO to obtain state funds and continue to deliver accessible and meaningful programs that benefits Hawaii's families, students, and communities.

We respectfully urge the Committee to **pass SB 441 SD1 HD1**. Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in support of this measure.

Peter Dames
President & CEO



IATSE LOCAL 665

FILM, TELEVISION, STAGE, PROJECTION AND TRADESHOWS
Since 1937

INTERNATIONAL ALLIANCE OF THEATRICAL STAGE EMPLOYEES, MOVING PICTURE TECHNICIANS, ARTISTS AND ALLIED CRAFTS
OF THE UNITED STATES, ITS TERRITORIES AND CANADA, AFL-CIO, CLC



Thirty-Third Legislature, State of Hawai'i
Regular Session of 2025
House Committee on Finance
Testimony by IATSE 665
March 27th, 2025

SB441 SD1 HD1 - RELATING TO THE HAWAII SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

Aloha Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Takenouchi, and members of the House committee,

My name is Tuia'ana Scanlan, IATSE International Trustee and President of IATSE Local 665, the union representing technicians and artisans in the entertainment industry in Hawai'i. **IATSE 665 strongly supports SB441 SD1 HD1**, relating to the Hawai'i Symphony Orchestra.

The Hawai'i Symphony Orchestra is an essential piece of the tapestry of arts in Hawai'i. Founded in 1900, The symphony hosts shows and programs featuring musicians and performing artists from around the world, in addition to promoting local talent within Hawaii. Designating the Hawai'i Symphony Orchestra as the "State of Hawai'i Symphony Orchestra" will enable HSO to regularly obtain state funds to help cover its general operating costs. Our organizations have been working together for decades. We have supported them with the seasoned technical professionals necessary for their performances for many years and we are happy to support them in this initiative as well.

IATSE 665 strongly supports SB441 SD1 HD1. We urge your committee to do the same.
Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

In Solidarity,

Tuia'ana Scanlan
International Trustee
President, IATSE 665
(he/him/his)



TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SB441 SD1 HD1, RELATING TO THE HAWAII SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

March 27, 2025

Aloha Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Takenouchi, and Members of the Finance Committee:

The Democratic Party of Hawai'i **SUPPORTS** SB441 SD1 HD1, RELATING TO THE HAWAII SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA. Pursuant to the Platform of the Democratic Party of Hawai'i, the Party supports public funding going towards the arts, artists, arts education and cultural organizations and initiatives. The Hawai'i Symphony Orchestra is a gift to our communities and schools.

The Democratic Party of Hawai'i supports designating the Hawai'i Symphony Orchestra as the State of Hawai'i Symphony Orchestra. This designation will allow the state to further support the Symphony and its musicians, giving it the assistance it needs, including with funding to continue its work of educating and entertaining the people of Hawai'i.

Mahalo nui loa for the opportunity to testify in Support of SB441 SD1 HD1, RELATING TO THE HAWAII SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA. Should you have any questions or require further information, please contact the Democratic Party of Hawai'i at legislation@hawaiidemocrats.org.



1350 S. King Street, Suite 201 • Honolulu, HI • 96814
HiYouthSymphony.org | PacificMusicHI.org

March 26, 2025

RE: **SUPPORT for SB 441** RELATING TO THE HAWAII SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

Aloha e, Hawai'i State Legislature:

I'm writing on behalf of Hawai'i Youth Symphony (HYS), a long-term collaborator and friend to the HSO. Our histories have been intertwined since HYS was incorporated as a nonprofit in 1964, serving local keiki with a desire and passion to learn and perform orchestral music. Over the past sixty years, the two organizations have independently co-existed, working together to build a future for music in our state, where citizens of all ages and backgrounds can access the wide range of music that orchestras power and empower.

As I mentioned in prior testimony related to this bill, HSO fills an indelible community need that strengthens the will and resolve of our young people. Our collaborations with them over the years have evolved into a strategic alliance, one that amplifies impact, shares resources, and brings communities together. Of course, their strongest and most irreplaceable asset are their musicians. HSO's sharing of their musicians with HYS makes possible the semiannual Side-by-Side activities that our students love. That our students can sit shoulder-to-shoulder with esteemed professionals, and have their families attend—all for free—is an incredible community service.

At HYS, we espouse and believe in the core values of inspiration, dreaming courageously, growing together, and having fun, all of which are embedded in the work and programs on which we embark when collaborating with HSO.

Together, we empower and embody a musical community which models strength and resilience for all. As young people develop and cultivate their personal excellence, they will be sharp (and akamai) to experience the artful craft of studying music and enjoying the HSO, eventually seeing success in their careers and as well-rounded, worldly citizens. Over a dozen HSO musicians (myself included) and staff are alumni of HYS; clear evidence of the pipeline and long term positive impacts of having a professional orchestra in our state.

I support this bill for the many reasons that others have stated, and so that HSO can continue to be present in our community. HSO is an active resource, collaborator, and inspiration to all; a true treasure.


Randy Wong
President & CEO

Office: (808) 941-9706 x800
Email: randy@hiyouthsymphony.org

SB-441-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/26/2025 1:51:48 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/27/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Richard Ing	Hawaii Youth Symphony	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

RE: SB441

As a member of the Board of Directors of both the Hawai'i Youth Symphony and Hawai'i Symphony, I fully support SB 441.

The importance of music and music education is important to Hawaii culture, especially to all the children of Hawaii. Not only should every child should have a right to learn and play music, music and music education leads to stronger cultural enrichment, community engagement and economic impact.

Cultural enrichment - the Hawai'i Symphony Orchestra plays a vital role in promoting Hawaii's rich cultural heritage.

Community engagement - symphony orchestras and music education initiatives, bring communities together.

Economic impact - the music industry, including the Hawai'i Symphony Orchestra, contributes to Hawaii's economy by creating jobs, attracting tourism and supporting local businesses.

Thank you,

Richard Ing

SB-441-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/24/2025 2:46:26 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/27/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Autumn Woods	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dear Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Takenouchi, and Members of the Committee,

I am writing in strong support of SB441, which would designate the Hawai‘i Symphony Orchestra (HSO) as the official state symphony and provide essential funding for its operations. As both a patron and a new member of the HSO staff, I have experienced firsthand the profound impact this organization has on our community.

My family’s connection to the HSO began in 2020 when we streamed performances during the pandemic. Even from home, the orchestra’s artistry was undeniable. This inspired us to become subscribers in 2021, and live concerts quickly became a cherished experience. For my daughter, these moments were transformative. Meeting professional musicians, witnessing their artistry, and even conducting the HSO at a Waikīkī Shell concert shaped her musical journey. She later interned with the orchestra, volunteered after high school, and is now studying music in college - a testament to the inspiration she found through the HSO.

The HSO’s impact extends far beyond the concert hall. Its musicians serve as educators, mentors, and cultural ambassadors, fostering a lifelong appreciation for music in our schools and communities. The Symphony is a cornerstone of Hawai‘i’s arts landscape, uniting people through music and ensuring that the arts remain a vibrant part of our state’s identity.

I believe the success of the HSO is vital to Hawai‘i—not only for its artistic contributions but for the enrichment of all who call these islands home. I urge you to **support SB441** and invest in the future of the Hawai‘i Symphony Orchestra, ensuring that it can continue to inspire, educate, and connect our community for generations to come.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,
Autumn Woods

HSO Patron
Associate Director of Advancement
Hawai‘i Symphony Orchestra

SB-441-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/24/2025 2:57:21 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/27/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Marcia Kemble	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Greetings Committee Chair and Committee Members,

I am writing in strong support of SB441, SD1, designating the Hawai'i Symphony Orchestra as the State of Hawai'i Symphony Orchestra and appropriating funds to support it. The symphony provides so much more than traditional concerts of classical music, as important as those are. They offer all types of diverse concerts that appeal to different types of music lovers. They also collaborate with numerous other community groups and do significant outreach to the community, including free community concerts and school presentations. The symphony musicians are also the key music educators of young musicians in Hawaii. As a core cultural organization in Hawaii, the symphony deserves stable, ongoing funding.

Mahalo.

Marcia Kemble

Makiki

SB-441-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/24/2025 6:02:35 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/27/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Lynn Murakami Akatsuka	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly support SB 441, SD 1, HD 1 to pass this bill this session. Hawai'i Symphony Orchestra is Hawai'i's treasure and their performances reach out to young and our seniors in the community. This consistent funding as its state orchestra will enable more communities, e.g., on Oahu and our neighbor islands to experience the arts up front and in person.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in strong support of SB 441, SD 1, HD 1.

SB-441-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/24/2025 8:54:27 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/27/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Vicky Cayetano	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dear Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Takenouchi and Finance Committee Members,

I am writing in strong support of SB 441 SD1 HD1. For hundreds of years, there is a reason why people and governments support symphony orchestras. Symphonic music is an essential component of a society that understands that music is healing, that music supports academic performance and that music is necessary in order to have a happy and thriving community.

Thank you very much for your consideration.

Respectfully, Vicky Cayetano

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

The Thirty-Third Legislature, Regular Session of 2025

Hearing Date and Time: Thursday, March 27, 2025 at 2 PM

Re: **SB 441, SD1, HD 1 RELATING TO THE HAWAII SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA**

Written Testimony Only

CHAIR YAMASHITA, VICE CHAIR TAKENOUCHI, AND MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE

My name is Lloyd Lim and I am testifying in my individual capacity in strong support of SB 441, HD 1 providing funding to the Hawaii Symphony Orchestra (HSO). The current HSO is a vastly superior orchestra to the HSO of 20 to 50 years ago. This is an excellent orchestra on the upswing with great future potential for Hawaii. The string section sound would surprise anyone. I have heard live performances by the Vienna Philharmonic, the Berlin Philharmonic, the Concertgebouw of Amsterdam, the Boston Symphony, the Chicago Symphony, the Philadelphia Orchestra, the New York Philharmonic, the Montreal Symphony and the St. Louis Symphony. I feel as if I have a basis for comparison.

Many of the orchestra musicians are also music teachers in our community helping to raise our kids. I dropped out of the piano as a kid and turned to the clarinet before taking up piano again after high school. How I wish I had kept at the piano as a kid. My brain would have developed better and faster and I would have been far better prepared for college, graduate school, law school and my career. But ensemble playing via the clarinet was the bridge that kept me in music.

But you don't have to take my word for it. *Columbia Magazine* (Spring/Summer 2015) noted that Columbia Medical School considers a music background in admissions because it can assist both diagnosis skills and the motor control needed for surgery. Also, *The Great Courses* class Music and the Brain taught by Professor Anniruddh D. Patel noted that music training also has a significant overlapping effect on the development of verbal skills.

I have gone to many HSO concerts and have been using social media to talk about HSO in the hopes that the word will get out to folks with an interest in classical music who might use it as an excuse to visit Hawaii. I interact with classical music buffs in the US mainland, Japan, Hong Kong, England, Germany and Italy. We live in a troubled world, but because most orchestra music is without words, it can form a basis for relationships that avoids contentious political issues.

As a kid growing up in Honolulu, I took a risk being a classical music buff. It made me suspect. I'd like to see that viewpoint change. Not everyone likes classical music, but that is often because they had a bad initial exposure to it. There is material for pretty much everyone in classical music, and over time you can climb into more of it as you like. Classical music used to be for aristocrats, snobs (let's face it), but with YouTube that is no longer true. Ideally, the richest people in Hawaii should contribute to HSO. But how can we ask them to be donors, if the State government won't take up the leadership position?

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony, and for your favorable consideration.

Lloyd Lim

Lloyd Lim, 1525 Wilder Ave #1008, Honolulu, HI 96822, Lloydlim600bach@aol.com

SB-441-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/25/2025 8:48:35 AM

Testimony for FIN on 3/27/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Sitarani Crevier	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Takenouchi, and Esteemed House Finance Committee Members,

Mahalo for hearing SB441 SD1 HD1 and for considering granting the Hawai'i Symphony Orchestra designation as the State Symphony of Hawai'i. SB441 is an investment in the future of the arts in Hawai'i. By securing this designation and providing essential funding to expand its reach, we ensure that HSO can continue serving as a cornerstone of our cultural community, reaching more residents across all islands. I respectfully urge you to support SB441 and help keep symphonic music thriving in Hawai'i.

Since childhood, music has had a profound impact on my life—self-esteem, connection to creativity, exposure to culture and history—and to this day, music remains an increasingly valuable part of my life and experience. I'm not a professional nor even amateur musician, though I studied music from the ages of six to 18; but my early exposure to classical music seeded a love that continues today and enriches my life, especially thanks to the year-long programs of Hawai'i Symphony Orchestra.

We are fortunate to have an orchestra of such extraordinary caliber here in Hawai'i. Beside the moving performances they offer us at Blaisdell Concert Hall, Hawai'i Theatre Center and the Waikiki Shell, HSO is inspiring our next generation, whether they wish to become musicians themselves or simply benefit from the ways a musical education challenges and expands their own capabilities.

Each year, HSO presents over 50 dynamic concerts, including free park performances and educational programs, ensuring that music is accessible to audiences across our state. With the passing of SB441, the Hawai'i Symphony Orchestra will be able to continue delivering programs that benefit Hawai'i's students, families, and communities. Increased funding would allow HSO to expand its free education concerts, such as Symphony of the Hawaiian Birds and Symphony of the Hawai'i Forests, which introduce thousands of young students to orchestral music in an engaging and culturally meaningful way. These initiatives foster creativity and inspire the next generation of musicians and arts supporters.

I have personally seen how HSO's programs unite people of all backgrounds. The orchestra's HapaSymphony Series showcases the unique musical heritage of Hawai'i by blending symphonic music with the talents of beloved local artists like Jake Shimabukuro and Robert

Cazimero. These concerts celebrate our islands' rich cultural landscape and demonstrate the orchestra's role as a bridge between tradition and innovation.

This acknowledgement as our State Symphony helps ensure that HSO can continue to educate, inspire, employ and entertain Hawai'i residents of all ages as well as visitors who wish to experience a taste of Pacific culture through music. Hawai'i Symphony Orchestra is the only orchestra to offer such significant support to musicians and works of our region of the world, and I thank you for considering this recognition for their profound impact on our community.

With aloha,

Sitarani Crevier

SB-441-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/25/2025 8:56:52 AM

Testimony for FIN on 3/27/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Sofia Furtado	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Mahalo ‘oukou no keā manawa ha‘i‘ōlelo ma kēia Pila 441 o Ka ‘Aha Kenekoa, no laila hiki i ho‘olilo hui aupuni ‘ana nei ‘o Hawai‘i Symphony Orchestra a ho‘oka‘awale lākou kālā i loko o ka Moku‘āina o Hawai‘i. Kāko‘o loa au kēia Pila 441 SD1 HD1 a ka‘u mau mele hoa mai Hawai‘i Symphony Orchestra e ho‘omau mālama ‘ana no nā mo‘olelo mele nui loa o Hawai‘i.

Thank you all for this opportunity to testify on Senate Bill 441, so that the Hawai‘i Symphony Orchestra can become an official government organization and appropriate their funds within the State of Hawaii. I strongly support SB 441 SD1 HD1 and my fellow musicians from the Hawai‘i Symphony Orchestra who continue to preserve Hawai‘i’s vast musical history.

SB-441-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/25/2025 11:34:12 AM

Testimony for FIN on 3/27/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Rebecca Schmidt	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

To Whom It May Concern,

The Hawai'i Symphony Orchestra (formerly the Honolulu Symphony Orchestra) has been a huge part of my life since 1981. At the age of 5 years old, my father took me to nearly every concert the HSO performed, whether at the Blaisdell for classical concerts, Kailua Beach Park for community concerts, Waikiki Shell for pops concerts featuring artists like Doc Severinson, or even The Honolulu Zoo featuring local young artists. Having studied classical piano since the age of 6, the HSO provided MANY opportunities for me to hear fine music and grow musically.

The HSO has always encouraged the younger generations to learn about the symphony orchestra and the impact music can have in their lives. I experienced this first hand when I auditioned for the HSO's Youth Talent Pool in the 1980s. I was able to perform with the Honolulu Symphony Orchestra as a 6th grader playing a Bach piano concerto and as an 8th grader playing a Mozart piano concerto. Those moments tremendously impacted my life and shaped my future. I am now a public school beginning band and orchestra teacher to 5th graders as they begin their musical instrument endeavors!

The HSO has always had phenomenal musicians and trust me, I've heard many orchestras across the country and even internationally. The music they've shared with their audiences over the past 40+ years have touched hearts, brought healing, inspiration, and even bridged generational and cultural gaps.

The power of music via the Hawai'i Symphony Orchestra must continue for future generations. I cannot properly express the support and hope I have for this organization and their future. I fully support SB441 SD1 HD1! Music matters!

Mahalo,

Rebecca Uejio Schmidt

SB-441-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/25/2025 11:36:14 AM

Testimony for FIN on 3/27/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kiyomi Umezawa	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly support SB441 SD1 HD1, following many other people in Hawai'i who love and believe in music.

I am an early childhood educator and I witness the power and influence of music on young children and their healthy development. That should be the same for all people regardless of their age.

While music is beautiful, creating and performing them is not always beautiful. Sadly, that is quite true. Professional musicians are always in need of financial support and are under a lot of stress. I do believe they deserve strong support from the States as the organization that brings beauty into our life, especially in this uncertain time.

SB-441-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/25/2025 11:36:55 AM

Testimony for FIN on 3/27/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
jean tsou tsukamoto	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

As a parent of a child whose journey in music started at age 4 and continues to present at age 38, I can attest to the importance of his mentors who are (were) all HSO musicians. They not only taught him excellent violin skills but the joy of music, performance, and teamwork.

The health of HSO is vital to the State of Hawaii. The musicians sacrifice a great deal to stay and live in our State. They can earn a better, easier living almost anywhere else in the country. But Hawaii is a special place, and they all sense and embrace that.

I fully support this bill to acknowledge and support a vital component of our mental and physical well being that music plays a key role in. The musicians at HSO deserve our support.

SB-441-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/25/2025 11:37:16 AM

Testimony for FIN on 3/27/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Daniel Murariu	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am in support of SB441 SD1HD1. It is absolutely crucial for our city and state to support HSO in its mission. HSO does an incredible job and it is needed in our community. Thank you.

SB-441-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/25/2025 11:37:30 AM

Testimony for FIN on 3/27/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Michelle K.	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Committee Members,

I strongly SUPPORT passing this bill because recognizing the Hawaii Symphony Orchestra will show that we prioritize the arts in the state and increase interest in classical music and more. The HSO is a joy and gem in our community that we must value and share with current and future generations. Everyone who has a chance to witness HSO perform is like experiencing magic in real life. Hawaii needs HSO more than ever especially during these uncertain times, and let's give them our full support NOW. Thank you for your time and kind consideration.

Mahalo,
Michelle

SB-441-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/25/2025 11:42:39 AM

Testimony for FIN on 3/27/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Matthew Danna	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

The HAWAII SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA is a valuable part of our community. In this time it is more important than ever to support our own artists and musicians on a state level.

SB-441-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/25/2025 11:43:04 AM

Testimony for FIN on 3/27/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Gregory M. Sato	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly support this bill. Support of The Hawaii Symphony Orchestra pays dividends for our community in so many ways. Beyond the support of culture, the arts support thriving minds. Research demonstrates that music stimulates brain growth and animates social emotional connection with other cultures and people. For children living on an island this connection beyond Hawaii is essential to defining who we are as a community. Thank you for your time.

SB-441-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/25/2025 11:47:18 AM

Testimony for FIN on 3/27/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Lillian Cunic	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I, Lilijania Cunic, hereby support the Hawai‘i Symphony Orchestra as the State of Hawai‘i Symphony Orchestra and would support general fund appropriations to the State of Hawai‘i Symphony Orchestra from the requirements of chapter 42F, Hawai‘i Revised Statutes. I also support appropriates funds for general operating costs of the Orchestra and for deposit into the State of Hawai‘i Endowment Fund. Effective 7/1/3000. (HD1)

SB-441-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/25/2025 11:47:24 AM

Testimony for FIN on 3/27/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Malia Rao	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dear Finance Committee,

I am writing to express my strong support for this Bill which will help sustain the Hawaii Symphony Orchestra (HSO) and its invaluable contributions to our community.

As a parent, I have seen firsthand the impact of HSO's programs. My children have enjoyed HSO performances since they were in utero, and their love for music has grown thanks to the orchestra's accessibility and outreach. Recently, my son Manu had the incredible opportunity to perform in the HYS & HSO side-by-side community performance—an experience that has deeply inspired him.

HSO's free public events have been instrumental in introducing my family to live symphonic music. Since my youngest children are not yet ready for a full-length indoor concert, these events provide a rare opportunity for them to experience the magic of orchestral music in an open and welcoming setting. The memories created at these concerts will last a lifetime, fostering a love for the arts that will benefit them for years to come.

By supporting this bill, you will help ensure that HSO can continue offering accessible, high-quality musical experiences to families like mine and many others across our community. I urge you to vote in favor of this important legislation and continue investing in the cultural and educational enrichment of Hawaii's future generations.

Mahalo for your time and for your commitment to the arts in our community.

Sincerely,

Malia Rao, The Rao Family

SB-441-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/25/2025 11:50:16 AM

Testimony for FIN on 3/27/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Perle Besserman	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

As kamaaina forty years, we have supported the HSO and have always been deeply rewarded. Especially in times of chaos, pandemic, and threat, the music has always been there to encourage and thrill us to the glories of art at its best. The state of Hawai'i owes so much to the great musicians who provide the highest cultural experience for our islands. We urge you to pass Bills SB441 / SD1HD1 for the benefit of all who call Hawai'i home.

SB-441-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/25/2025 11:50:39 AM

Testimony for FIN on 3/27/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Megan Conley	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Every time I go to hear the Hawaii Symphony I am moved. The music expresses emotions that words cannot. I love connecting with other members of the community, and the HSO does an excellent job of offering a variety of programs, often collaborating with local artists. I brought my 7 year old son to see the symphony's recent performance of Beethoven 9- he was rapt. We must do all we can to support and uplift this organization that enriches our community- now more than ever. We should all be very proud that in addition to our natural beauty and aloha spirit, Hawaii is home to a world-class symphony.

SB-441-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/25/2025 11:51:24 AM

Testimony for FIN on 3/27/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kelsey Ann Kimura	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

As the only professional orchestra in the state, the Hawai'i Symphony Orchestra is a cornerstone of the performing arts, attracting and employing many local musicians. Many of these musicians not only perform in the HSO. Many are teachers and serve as the foundation for music education. The HSO is essential to inspiring the next generation of musicians. Without the HSO, the quality of school music programs would decline as students would not have the adequate support to thrive in their arts programs.

I support SB 441 because the passing of the bill would be the next step towards grow the reach of the HSO - school visits, expanded partnerships, and innovative programming. The HSO is the paragon of musical excellence in our islands, and its presence fosters the growth of the arts.

SB-441-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/25/2025 11:53:58 AM

Testimony for FIN on 3/27/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Rebecca J. Carlson	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

I am writing to support this bill. My family recently went to a concert where my son's college choir had been invited to perform with the Hawaii Symphony Orchestra. We enjoyed it so much we have now purchased tickets for the whole family to see two more performances this season. The orchestra is a wonderful asset to our community. Investing in the arts not only draws business to other establishments in Honolulu, it allows us to come together in joy and peace to take part in our common humanity and the enjoyment of music.

Mahalo,

Rebecca J. Carlson

Laie, Hawaii

SB-441-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/25/2025 11:54:17 AM

Testimony for FIN on 3/27/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Elizabeth Mastrantonio	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please support this valuable AND inspiring asset for all of Hawaii. Orchestras are essential to society and offer inspiration and also an opportunity to share an evening or afternoon together as a family, a society, as a true OHANA. We are blessed to have such gifted, generous and talented musicians here in the middle of the Pacific. Your support will allow people on ALL islands to benefit from this treasure. Mahalo.

SB-441-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/25/2025 11:56:20 AM

Testimony for FIN on 3/27/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
JEFFREY LIM, M.D.	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

The Hawaii Symphony Orchestra (HSO) provides the Hawaii community with more than the opportunity to experience live the vast tapestry of the symphonic repertoire. This organization provides essential outreach and educational opportunities that have cultural impact across the spectrum of our State's demographics. Its Hapa Concert Series has broad appeal, with its support and showcasing of premiere local talent and culture. Through its Na Hoku Opio youth competition, HSO encourages instrumental excellence in Hawaii's young musicians and the once-in-a-lifetime thrill of performing with and being supported by a full professional orchestra. My son benefitted from this experience and it played an integral role in his life journey toward his current position as violinist with HSO. But I believe perhaps the most important benefit of HSO is the body of excellent musicians it assembles permanently in the islands. As an embedded workforce, the individual impact of each of these musicians through their teaching and educational efforts, inspiring performances, and the musical experimentation and curiosity they foster throughout our community is priceless.

SB-441-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/25/2025 11:57:02 AM

Testimony for FIN on 3/27/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Joseph Matthew Powell	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Passing and implementation of the orchestra as a state entity will further enhance opportunity for creative and sustainable growth in culture, education, and uniting the community. It has been a staple for generations now and government/state support in a time in which our federal government is failing us, will only prepare us better for the unforeseeable future

SB-441-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/25/2025 12:00:03 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/27/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Carol Maxym	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

please support this bill. It is essential for Hawaii to maintain this cultural icon.

Thanks you

SB-441-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/25/2025 12:21:01 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/27/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Wayne Yoshigai	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am writing to support this legislation because of the cultural and economic contributions made by the Honolulu Symphony to our state. Not only does the organization and its musicians make beautiful music for residents, but also they serve as critical musical resourced for our community. Without the symphony and its musicians Hawaii would lose our only outlet to professional classical music. Moreover the musicians generously provide their time and talent to our children as symphony members and teachers. We cannot afford to lose this resource and support public funding for the Symphony. The investment will reap many times in rewards for everyone. Thank you.

SB-441-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/25/2025 12:21:08 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/27/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Joan Bennet	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Honorable Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Takenouchi, and Esteemed Committee Members,

I am writing in strong support of SB441, a measure that would designate the Hawai‘i Symphony Orchestra as the official State Orchestra of Hawai‘i and secure critical funding for its future.

As a longtime supporter of the Hawai‘i Symphony Orchestra, I have seen firsthand the profound impact it has on our community. HSO is a pillar of Hawai‘i’s cultural and artistic landscape, bringing world-class music to residents across our islands. Through its free public concerts, education initiatives, and collaborations with local artists, the orchestra ensures that all people, regardless of background or location, have access to the transformative power of symphonic music.

The passing of SB441 would allow the Hawai‘i Symphony Orchestra to expand its impact in the community. Funding would support programs like Nā Hōkū ‘Ōpio – Young Stars, which provides young musicians in Hawai‘i with invaluable performance opportunities alongside professional artists. Additionally, HSO’s work with the Hawai‘i Youth Symphony fosters mentorship and hands-on learning, nurturing the next generation of musicians in our state.

Beyond education, HSO plays a vital role in Hawai‘i’s cultural and economic landscape. The orchestra employs some of the finest musicians in the country, many of whom dedicate their time to teaching and mentoring students. The annual Beethoven Festival brings together major arts organizations from across the state, showcasing Hawai‘i as a hub for world-class musical performances.

I truly believe that if this measure passes, it will enable Honolulu to take the next step toward becoming a world-class city—with a fully recognized, officially designated world-class orchestra. Without dedicated state support, HSO’s ability to serve our community will be significantly limited. SB441 is an opportunity to ensure that the orchestra continues to thrive and reach audiences across all islands. I urge you to support this measure and invest in the future of symphonic music in Hawai‘i.

Mahalo for your time and consideration,

Joan Bennet

SB-441-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/25/2025 12:26:10 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/27/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Cheryl Ernst	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am not a frequent symphony goer, but I believe it is an important community asset and I support taxpayer support so the Symphony can continue it's remarkable outreach efforts.

SB-441-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/25/2025 12:29:23 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/27/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Mary Holmes	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

I am in support of this Senate Bill because the Honolulu Symphony Orchestra is a vibrant part of the Hawaiian community, particularly under the excellent leadership of Maestro Dane Lam. Maestro Lam is not only a world renown musician and conductor, but he has an enormous appreciation for and inclusion of Hawaiian music traditions. He is beloved by orchestra members and audiences and we are very fortunate to have him here.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Mary Holmes

SB-441-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/25/2025 12:30:40 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/27/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
lynne matusow	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

This is a wonderful bill. It provides residents and visitors statewide with untold opportunities to appreciate music in many forms as they attend live concerts, some of them free of charge. Guest artists come from around the world, as well as Hawaii nei. In addition, the Symphony commissions new works by living composers from the Pacific. Please move this bill forward.



COLLEGE of ARTS, LANGUAGES & LETTERS
DEPARTMENT of MUSIC

March 12, 2025

RE: Senate Bill 441

Honorable Legislators,

I write in strong support of SB441, designating the Hawai'i Symphony Orchestra as our state orchestra.

The HSO has long been an essential part of the rich tapestry of musical arts found in Hawai'i. Its activities include not only live performances, but also an array of educational and community service events that provide chances for everyone to experience the power of live orchestral music, an inspiring and uplifting experience that simply cannot be replicated any other way.

The HSO strives to be the orchestra for the entire state, presenting music that represents the cultural fabric of our islands. Its performances encompass a wide variety of styles ranging from classical to pops to Hawaiian, touching on the many communities that make up our state.

In addition, the HSO attracts first-rate musicians to live here, who in turn serve as teachers, mentors and musical role models for our keiki and our community. Many also serve as faculty at the University of Hawai'i-Mānoa Department of Music, educating students who will go on to become future leaders of our state. The positive impacts of the orchestra thus ripple outward in many ways beyond simply playing concerts.

The funding proposed in SB441 will provide support and fiscal stability needed to ensure the Hawai'i Symphony Orchestra continues to thrive and make our state a better place. I offer my most enthusiastic backing, and ask you to please support this bill with your vote

Mahalo nui loa for your consideration,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Dr. Reid Womack".

Dr. Donald Reid Womack
Chair, Department of Music
Composer and Professor of Composition and Theory
Faculty Member, Center for Japanese Studies
Faculty Member, Center for Korean Studies

SB-441-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/25/2025 12:38:58 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/27/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Janice Cole	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Strongly support providing the Hawaii Symphony Orchestra with funds to provide solvency to the organization as it has supported our community with quality musical variety with full orchestral fanfare. To continue to hire professional musicians and venues at which to perform, secure funding is needed that the State of Hawaii could provide. Our personal support is not sufficient as seen when the Honolulu Symphony Orchestra was forced to close. I had benefited from the Symphony in the past as they provided scholarships for private lessons, opportunities to participate in orchestras on the mainland, and school performances that kept classical music alive in the public school system. I have to attribute my academic and life success to the Symphony and the Department of Education as they were in close collaboration. This is crucial to improve the quality of education in Hawaii, as well. Thank you for your consideration.

SB-441-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/25/2025 12:39:06 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/27/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
William Reese Liggett	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Finance Chair and Committee Members

I am William Reese Liggett

I cannot think of a great world state that does not have a fantastic art museum, a thriving university, and a great symphony orchestra.

Of course, an orchestra is a net positive for a thriving economy. We serve tens of thousands of audiences each year, many of whom will go for a meal, buy flowers, or rent hotel rooms, providing business for local companies. A recent study on the Pittsburgh Symphony, demonstrates that, [for every dollar the symphony spends, it generate four dollars in the local economy](#). The Hawai'i Symphony Orchestra impacts our local businesses in much the same way.

SB-441-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/25/2025 12:40:53 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/27/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Margaret Murchie	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dear Legislators, Please support the Honolulu Symphony with as much financial support as possible. It is wonderful to have our people exposed to all types of music. The symphony has already gone through various closures over the years with minimal support. Music is uplifting and they do so much extra for the community, especially keiki, who might never have the opportunity to experience. The City's concert hall anyd the Waikiki Shell have recently both been upgraded to provide better settings and enjoyment. Please support the Symphony.. Aloha, Margaret Murchie

SB-441-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/25/2025 12:50:03 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/27/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Gail Switzer	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

At a time when our Federal government is attacking public cultural institutions, it is more necessary than ever for State governments to support their local cultural institutions. The HI Symphony Orchestra is very highly rated, a pride to the State and an important asset for the residents. I urge you to support this bill to ensure the continuation of this very valuable State resource.

SB-441-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/25/2025 12:51:46 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/27/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Brook Lee	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair, Vice-Chair, and Members of the Committee,

I am writing to express my strong support for the Hawai‘i Symphony Orchestra (HSO) and to highlight the vital role it plays not only in preserving and sharing classical music here in the islands, but also in its dedicated efforts to collaborate meaningfully with the Hawaiian music community.

The HSO has demonstrated an intentional commitment to honoring and perpetuating the host culture of Hawai‘i by building bridges with local artists and cultural practitioners. Through their partnerships with members of the Hawaiian music community and other local creatives, the orchestra has created unique opportunities for musical collaboration that uplift ‘ōlelo Hawai‘i, mele Hawai‘i, and the stories and values of our islands.

In a time when cultural preservation and respectful engagement with Native Hawaiian traditions are more important than ever, it is essential that we support institutions that not only recognize their kuleana (responsibility) to the host culture, but actively work to integrate it into their mission and programming. The HSO is one such organization.

By providing funding and support to the Hawai‘i Symphony Orchestra, we as a state affirm the value of the arts, the richness of our diverse musical heritage, and the importance of nurturing partnerships that honor the foundation upon which Hawai‘i stands.

Mahalo nui loa for your time and consideration.

Mahalo Piha,

Brook Lee

Miss Universe 1997

SB-441-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/25/2025 12:54:12 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/27/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Penelope Hazzard	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

We need our world class symphony which has outreach programs to our schools important for mental heath.

SB-441-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/25/2025 12:55:29 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/27/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Martha Nakajima	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly support this bill as a contribution toward keeping a high level professional symphony orchestra in Hawaii. This is the only means of maintaining a corps of instrumental music teachers in the state to keep art music thriving in forthcoming generations. We can't let musical talent go undiscovered and undeveloped in our communities.

sincerely, Martha Nakajima Honolulu



Michael Scott Asato Cuthbert
Chief Musical Officer and Principal Software Engineer
www.artusimusic.com

Finance Committee
Hon. Rep. Kyle Yamashita, Chair
Hon. Rep. Jenna Takenouchi

Re: Position of **Support** for SB441

25 March 2025

Dear Chair Yamashita, Vice-Chair Takenouchi, and Honorable Members of the Committee,

I write as a musician, educator, entrepreneur, and most especially as a resident of Hawai'i to strongly urge support **SB441** and make the HSO in practice what it already is in our hearts: the official State Orchestra of Hawai'i.

The Hawai'i Symphony Orchestra is continually looking for ways to involve the entire community, through free outreach concerts, connecting with local youth symphonies, sharing their performances for free on radio and on social media. The activities of this group are incredible! By comparison, from 2014–2018, I was a member of the Boston Symphony Orchestra's Media and Technology board committee, and I can say that the HSO is making just as strong a positive impact on our community as the BSO was in their's...all without hundreds of millions in the bank. The HSO is also in a leading position showcasing important Hawaiian and local composers both the community and to the world.

The HSO also contributes greatly to Hawai'i's economy, directly, but even more indirectly through restaurant meals and hotel rooms booked by attendees and especially by attracting and retaining talent across all industries, but particularly in the tech world, among professionals who regard a high-quality orchestra in state as a necessity.

HSO is already making a great impact on the economy and arts in Hawai'i. This impact will grow even more if SB441 is passed. I urge everyone to support this important bill.

Mahalo nui,

A handwritten signature in red ink, appearing to read "Michael Scott Asato Cuthbert".

Michael Scott Asato Cuthbert
michael.asato.cuthbert@gmail.com

SB-441-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/25/2025 1:04:51 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/27/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Pedro A. Peraza Soto	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

To whom it may concern,

During the year 2019 thru 2023 my family and myself greatly benefited from the Hawai'i Symphony Orchestra services and performances. Amidst the COVID-19 pandemic and the social distancing mandates, the Hawai'i Symphony Orchestra still found ways to provide live performances and also online (virtual) concerts for the enjoyment of the community. The HapaSymphony series plus the Symphony at the Shell (Tom Moffatt Waikiki Shell) were some of the most memorable experiences during my time living in Hawai'i.

As a military service member I greatly enjoyed going to the concerts with my family, and I believe so did most of the local community. Being a professional musician (trumpeter) myself, I also got the opportunity to be a substitute musician for some of the concerts the HSO offered. Working along side high caliber musicians in the HSO was a really enriching and inspiring experience.

I believe that by having the state of Hawai'i represent and fund the HSO, the orchestra will be able to better serve and contribute to the local community, the military families fluctuating in and out of the island and also the myriad of tourists that stop by the island of Ohau.

SB-441-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/25/2025 1:22:28 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/27/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Michael Pond	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dear Committee,

I respectfully request you approve measure SB441. I spend a couple months per winter in Hawaii and one of the main things I look forward to is attending a symphony concert of the Hawaii Symphony Orchestra. It is a lively and vibrant part of Hawaii's art scene and a great benefit to the community. I am always gratified to see a wide range of young and old people in attendance. This, along with your support, will help ensure a long and prosperous future for the HSO.

Respectfully,

Michael Pond

SB-441-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/25/2025 1:26:47 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/27/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Marilyn Katzman	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Music is healing. Music is universal. It transcends all language barriers. The Hawaii Symphony Orchestra has been doing this for many years. We are so very lucky to have this treasure out in the middle of the Pacific Ocean on Oahu. To be able to extend this music to the outer islands and to make sure the symphony is around for many more years to come, I support SB441 SD1 HD1.

Mahalo,

Marilyn Katzman

ROBERT C. and JEAN L. JOHNSON

1731 Hale Koa Drive
Honolulu, Hawaii 96821-1026
(808) 386-0672
Email: rjohnson@hawaii.edu
jeanl@hawaii.edu

March 25, 2025

The Honorable Kyle Yamashita, Chair
House Finance Committee

Aloha Committee Chair, Vice-Chair, and Members:

We are submitting this written testimony to voice our strong support for **SB 441, SD1 HD1, Relating to the Hawai'i Symphony Orchestra**. In years past, our state came close to losing this cultural heritage of classical music. Fortunately, with the support of the musical community and valuable community leadership, the Hawai'i Symphony Orchestra has emerged stronger, more vibrant, and fiscally sound than ever.

You have received much testimony describing the Symphony's activities and educational contributions statewide and throughout the Pacific. The testimony demonstrates the great appreciation and enjoyment of the Symphony among our children, adults, and elders. Hawai'i is fortunate that Dane Lam accepted the position of Music and Artistic Director. He contributes a passionate performance to each concert. Moreover, words cannot begin to fully describe what the Symphony adds to Hawai'i's culture, but as part of the audience on Sunday, March 9, we experienced the long-standing and thunderous ovation from a packed house at the Blaisdell Concert Hall following Dane's conducting Beethoven's Ninth Symphony.

For decades, we have attended every concert, made annual monetary contributions, and have designated the Symphony as a beneficiary in our Trusts. Not only does the Symphony add much to the quality of our lives, it is another fabulous benefit of living in Paradise!

We ask for your support for SB 441, SD1 HD1, to officially designate the Symphony as the Hawaii State Symphony Orchestra and to provide fiscal support for this state treasure!

Mahalo,

Handwritten signatures of Jean Johnson and Robert C. Johnson. The signature of Jean Johnson is written in a cursive script above the signature of Robert C. Johnson, which is also in cursive.

SB-441-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/25/2025 1:37:40 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/27/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Tom Wallace	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please support the inclusion of the Honolulu symphony as our state symphony

SB-441-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/25/2025 1:38:57 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/27/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Ted Meehan	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Representative Kyle Yamashita, Members of the House Finance Committee,

I support SB 441 SD1 HD1.

I have been a classical music concert goer for over 50 years and I cannot think of any extracirrucular activity have enjoyed more than attending live orchestral concerts.

The Hawaii Symphony Orchestra is truly a world class symphony orchestra, providing a wide variety of music for audiences of all ages. Whether it's Beethoven or Bernstein or soloists like Ray Chen or Jiji, the orchestra, under the baton of the incredible Dane Lam, brings the world of music into the lives of thousand of people every year.

We are fortunate to have the HSO and by supporting SB 441 SD1 HD1, you ensure we will continue to be treated to world class music. Symphonic music is an essential part of my life and important to all the communities it serves in the islands.

I urge you to support SB 441 SD1 HD1. Thank you.

Ted Meehan

SB-441-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/25/2025 1:40:09 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/27/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Deborah Wallace	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

it is so important that the Honolulu Symphony becomes our official state Symphony. The symphony brings joy and education to our community and we do have a fabulous symphony. we are so blessed to have this.

SB-441-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/25/2025 1:48:43 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/27/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jennifer Leigh Baker	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha -

I am writing in support of [SB441 SD1 HD1](#), which would give Hawaii Symphony Orchestra the designation as the state orchestra of Hawai'i and provide funding. In these chaotic times, the artistry of our symphony musicians provides respite and inspiration, as well as a clear message that Hawaii is committed to the arts and the real benefits they provide society.

This designation as our state symphony, and the funding provided, will allow the symphony to bring more and more residents to performances, and ensure that populations undeserved due to income get to experience the joy of live symphonic music.

I am strongly in support of this bill.

Aloha, Jen Baker

SB-441-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/25/2025 1:58:07 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/27/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
April Ching	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha and Mahalo to the Committee,

The Hawai'i Symphony Orchestra is invaluable to the state of Hawai'i. As a mother of two, I have benefited greatly from the cultural enrichment the HSO has provided to my life and those of my children. My children have both played violin from a young age, and access to a symphony orchestra of the caliber of the HSO has given them inspiration and education, as well as knowledge about the value of the arts to our human lives. The HSO already serves the community by providing free and inexpensive concerts to the public, as well as many performance tickets that are cheaper than movie theatre tickets. At a time when arts programs are being cut in our schools for lack of funding, the HSO has given us access to music. Especially in these times, we should enshrine the HSO as a valuable state institution and ensure continued investment for the continuation of the joy it brings to us all. Aloha. April Ching

SB-441-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/25/2025 2:10:26 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/27/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Susan Ing	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Communities are built and sustained by the sharing of stories and history. Newspapers, magazines, TV, blogs, vlogs, video, posts, the list goes on with all the ways in which we communicate and exchange these stories. But beyond our sharing of stories through language, lies the power and beauty of exchanging history and chapters through music. Music that captures the soul of what makes our community thrive and connects it to a global energy, without the barrier of language!

Please commit to building and sustaining Hawaii Symphony Orchestra as one of the most impactful ways to connect our people, our community and our state.

Mahalo nui loa for doing the right thing on behalf of your constituents!

SB-441-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/25/2025 2:18:40 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/27/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Marianne Whiting	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly and fully support designating the Hawai'i Symphony Orchestra as the State Orchestra.

For our state during an uncertain economy to emphasize the importance of music in our communities with financial support would speak volumes of the importance of the arts in our culture.

Official designation of our symphony as our state orchestra elevates our state culturally and globally while enabling the orchestra to reach out to more people in more corners of our state. It would be a source of pride, much like that of the Royal Hawaiian Band, our state Band.

A couple examples of the symphony's impact on our island. Their 'In the Park' series brings communities together while offering invaluable music introduction to families who may not otherwise be introduced to this type of music. Ecstatic young people in the audience are invited to come on stage as 'maestro', opening doors for further music appreciation. The joy created by these special community events is palpable.

Note the Orchestra's expanded educational and experiential opportunities via the Hawai'i Youth Orchestra supplementing school's arts programs. Their community outreach not only entertains yet educates our citizens of all ages through programs in schools to one-on-one lessons as well. Research continually demonstrates the positive impact music has on academic performance.

Repeatedly they have demonstrated their value and contribution to Hawai'i's quality of life. As a Hawai'i citizen, I would be proud of our legislature to designate a state orchestra.

The gift of music - what a wonderful gift to give to the people of Hawaii. Please vote in favor of this bill.

SB-441-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/25/2025 2:28:10 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/27/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Norman Foster	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support SB441 with all my heart. The Hawaii Symphony, of which I have been a dedicated member for nearly 40 years, has earned and deserves the recognition and strong support this bill would bring.

The Symphony benefits our community in many important ways. It provides a wide variety of performances and educates our young musical talent, providing valuable performance opportunities. As an arts organization, it is an essential part of the local economy, providing many jobs directly as well as indirectly through the ripple effect. The organization brings together many different segments of the community in various collaborative projects. It is also a reflection of the rich and unique culture of Hawaii in a way that no other organization can. It is made up of professional musicians who are active in the community in many beneficial ways beyond playing for the Symphony, such as playing chamber music, jazz and other music styles for weddings and in restaurants, as well as providing private music lessons for our talented kids.

I remember when the Symphony was a 42-week season and toured the neighbor islands every season, presenting full orchestra concerts and small ensemble educational programs in schools. I hope that this bill will help us be able to expand our season and return to regular touring, fulfilling our mission of serving the entire state.

Again, I strongly support SB441 and I hope that this will help ensure the future of the HSO for years to come. With the economy as unpredictable as it is, we need everything that contributes to a healthy economy as we can find. The HSO fills this purpose as it fulfills at the same time its artistic mission.

Norm Foster, Second/E-flat Clarinet, Hawaii Symphony

Testimony on SB441 RE: The Hawaii Symphony Orchestra

I was a musician in the Honolulu/Hawai'i Symphony for 45 years, from 1971 to 2016. In that time I witnessed and participated in many momentous events, both good and bad. Each one left an indelible impression – indeed, changed my life.

One such event was the Symphony's trip to Kaua'i in 1992 in the aftermath of Hurricane 'Iniki. Coconut palms had no fronds; power lines were down, roofs of buildings had blown off, but hundreds of people came to the park to hear the orchestra. They were hugging, singing, and crying when the sounds of "Hawai'i Pono'i" and "Hawai'i Aloha" reached their ears. It was a great moment of healing for the entire island.

Another event was the last public performance by Rosemary Clooney on a HSO Pops Concert. I wrote about it, along with other factors that prove the Hawai'i Symphony's worth, in this excerpt from my book:

From *The Arts from the Bottom Up*, pg. 395-397
Marsha Schweitzer

To the Editor: On "Does Honolulu Need the Symphony?"

Midweek

Every five years or so somebody dredges up that tired old question again, "Does Honolulu need the symphony?" I thought everybody had already heard the question and already knew the obvious answer. At first I said to myself, why bother to answer this lame question yet again? But then, maybe the columnist who asked the question this time, and perhaps a few others, have been asleep and haven't gotten the word. So here it is.

The columnist asks "whether donors' and taxpayers' monies would be better spent on other social enterprises," and "might we be better off if that symphony donor money went straight into music programs in our schools?" These are meaningless questions, because there are no other social enterprises that address the community need that the symphony does or that could fill the niche of the symphony.

And while school music programs can certainly use money, we are talking apples and oranges here. The objectives of the symphony and of school music programs are not the same, not even close. The symphony exists to present concerts; it serves the entire community, not just school students, and although it does present educational programs, it is not an educational institution, it is an arts institution. By the same token, although school music groups occasionally present public performances as part of the educational process, they exist to serve the students, not the public; schools are not arts institutions, they are educational institutions.

Let me illustrate the value of arts institutions with the Honolulu Symphony's Grammy-nominated CD of its concert with the late Rosemary Clooney. The CD was an archive of a Honolulu Symphony Pops concert, part of the regular pops series that takes place every few weeks on the Blaisdell Center stage, part of the symphony's ongoing public service mission. It was a magical concert, which ended with a dying Clooney saying, "Thank you for one of the best nights of my life."

There were many forces that made that performance happen at such a magically high artistic level, but it all began with the existence of a resident professional orchestra with the artistic depth and organizational sophistication to bring all those forces together. Simply stated, Honolulu needs an orchestra so that nights like that are possible, so that our citizens can have the opportunity to experience art of the same life-changing quality and power as in every other major city in the world. And it is not enough to listen to CDs or import touring orchestras from elsewhere. We need a resident orchestral institution that is responsive and answerable to the community that owns it.

For that reason, government funding is not just necessary, it is desirable, because it is important that the orchestra be owned by all the people, not just by the moneyed elite, so that all of us can claim a piece of the symphony and share common responsibility for it. If the costs of the symphony are shared broadly over our entire population in the form of donations, ticket purchases, and taxpayer subsidies, each person's burden of keeping the symphony healthy and flourishing is light. Cities that understand this principle have orchestras that have survived much worse trouble than the Honolulu Symphony has ever seen, and have thrived even in the face of occasional deficits.

A CD is not a substitute for live music. Ask any restaurateur if his clientele responds the same way to Musak as to a live band. A recording of a musician's work is like a videotape of a dancer, or a photograph of a painting. It is a categorically different experience from a live concert and cannot replace the real thing. And there is another thing that cannot be replaced: The Honolulu Symphony has created over its 100-year history hundreds of original works and arrangements of Hawaiian music that would not now exist if the Honolulu Symphony did not exist. We have a library of arrangements by legendary Hawaii musicians like former Royal Hawaiian Bandmaster Lloyd Krause and local Filipino composer Angel Peña, as well as orchestral arrangements to accompany virtually all of our great Hawaiian musicians, from Don Ho to the Farden family to the Brothers Cazimero and Keali'i Reichel.

The arts are businesses, with all the same positive economic and societal impacts as other businesses. We need the symphony (and the Royal Hawaiian Band, and the Hawaii Opera Theater, and the Honolulu Academy of Arts, and Diamond Head Theater, and all the other arts) for the same reasons that we need banks, airlines, stores, restaurants, hospitals, schools, and all other enterprises that make our lives happier, healthier, and more satisfying.

Advocacy for the arts is one of the few social issues that enjoys true bi-partisan support. A belief in the value of the arts and a history of generosity in their support is shared across the sociopolitical spectrum. The arts help everyone and hurt no one. So what's the problem?

Marsha Schweitzer
905 Spencer St 404
Honolulu HI 96822
808-531-6617

SB-441-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/25/2025 2:30:08 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/27/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Nicole Ikeda Cossi	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

My name is Nicole Ikeda Cossi, a master's of music student in voice performance at UH Mānoa. I testify once again to the power and relevance of music for the health of a community.

Last I testified, I explained how, as a vocalist, HSO has impacted and vitally sustained other organizations that have intimately affected my development as a young musician on the island of 'Oahu: the Hawai'i Opera Theatre (HOT) and the Hawai'i Youth Symphony (HYS).

In this testimony, I will attest to the power of live music to heal and foster community. I studied the allied health discipline of Music Therapy at the University of Pacific from 2018-2022. During that time, I personally witnessed music's ability to excite, invigorate, soothe sorrow, process emotions, and even bring back long-lost memories and improve relationships among family.

Nothing could have prepared us for the first time in living memory, we could no longer play and sing together. When ensembles could no longer meet during the lockdown, we had work-arounds-- virtual concerts, attempts at re-establishing the beauty of playing together that was stripped away. Without making music with people, my spirit suffers.

It was this lockdown experience that taught me, the hard way, the invaluable richness of making sound together as one, the stories and conversations the music brings about, and the action it inspires.

Now in a class called Women in Music, I am learning about the essential role of music patronage in the music business. Female philanthropists founded some of the first American institutions of music and have pleaded for government support for their music organizations. Should she be alive today, the gifted multi-instrumentalist, singer, and composer, Queen Lili'uokalani, who advocated for the Kingdom of Hawai'i and resisted annexation until it was impossible, would very likely have found HSO's official designation as our state's orchestra to be an honor to the name and people of Hawai'i.

I support SB441 SD1 HD1 because Hawai'i deserves an official state orchestra. When culture prospers, society prospers.

For a healthy and thriving Hawai'i,

Nicole Ikeda Cossi

BALLET HAWAII

March 25, 2025

Honorable Members of the Hawaii State Legislature
Representative Kyle Yamashita and The House Finance Committee
State Capitol
415 S. Beretania Street
Honolulu, HI 96813

Dear Representative Yamashita and Honorable Members of the House Finance Committee:

I am writing to you in strong support of SB441 SD1 HD1, which proposes direct funding for the Hawaii Symphony Orchestra from the State of Hawaii. As an avid fan of the arts and the Executive Director of Ballet Hawaii, I deeply understand the immense value that organizations such as the Hawaii Symphony Orchestra bring to our community and the state at large.

The Hawaii Symphony Orchestra is an essential cultural institution that enriches our local arts scene and enhances the quality of life in Hawaii. As a nonprofit arts organization, it plays a pivotal role in connecting the community to world-class performances, offering educational programs, and providing a platform for local musicians to showcase their talents. This investment in the arts not only supports creativity but also contributes significantly to the state's economic vitality, tourism, and overall cultural heritage.

The arts community, including Ballet Hawaii, thrives on collaboration and mutual support. Direct funding for the Hawaii Symphony Orchestra would allow them to continue their invaluable work and ensure the future of artistic excellence in Hawaii. It would also benefit other organizations, like ours, as we share a common mission to enrich the lives of all who call Hawaii home.

I urge you to support SB441 SD1 HD1 and provide the Hawaii Symphony Orchestra with the direct funding they deserve. Our community stands to gain immeasurably from this investment, and it will ensure that the arts continue to thrive in our state for generations to come. As our former Mayor, Frank Fasi, was quoted when speaking about the arts: "No city can be great without culture and the arts. And to make a city loved by its people, it must be lovable since no city can be complete without dance, music and art."

Thank you for your time and consideration of this important matter.

Sincerely,



Richard Vida
Executive Director

650 Iwilei Road, Box 221
Honolulu, Hawaii 96817-5319
www.ballethawaii.org
EIN: 99-0163014
Phone: (808) 521-8600

SB-441-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/25/2025 2:58:19 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/27/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Cassandra Senner	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

The symphony is a wonderful part of Hawaii. So many people are served by their music. It is important that school children hear types of music & musical instruments that they may not otherwise be exposed to. Children learn there is a wider world beyond our shores & many different ways to think. Music aids the path to knowledge. Music hones the learning mind. Exposure to symphonic music can start a child on an interesting way in life. In Hawaii we have a beautiful juxtaposition & blending of many music styles. The symphony caters to many different styles, different tastes, different time periods. The symphony is a very valuable asset to the community, including all islands, all our citizens. Mahalo.

SB-441-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/25/2025 3:05:42 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/27/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Madeleine Strange	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please accept my written testimony in support of **SB441 SD1 HD1** for the Hawaii Symphony Orchestra. The program adds tremendous learning and value to Hawaiian's of all ages. I have really been engaged by Dane Lam and his vision of the orchestra and how it can meet the community where it is. Two wonderful examples of the symphony orchestra coming out to meet the community is the annual park evening event in Kailua and the many performances of different musical genres at the Bishop Museum for Lahinia. The scores performed engaged people of all ages and had our household attend additional performances at the Hawaii Theatre. I believe the orchestra is a significant cultural, economic and educational experience that should be continued and invested in for Hawaiian's, students, musicians and tourists. Thank you.

SB-441-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/25/2025 3:21:50 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/27/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Chifumi Nagai	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support the SB 441 SDHD1 for the Hawai'i Symphony.

I am a resident of Hawai'i for 48 years and a music lover for classical music, opera, ballet, musical and Hawaiian music. Honolulu symphony/ Hawai'i symphony has provided a wonderful music bases for our our community and children for the next generations.

With the superior leadership and music excellency of Maestro Dane Lam, the Hawai'i Symphony can continue giving bases of all the music to our community. The symphony's role in Hawai'i is beyond the classical music.

Thank you.

Chifumi Nagai, Kailua,HI

SB-441-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/25/2025 3:37:30 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/27/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Mariann Tesaro	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Our orchestra is a net positive for a thriving economy. We serve tens of thousands of audiences each year, many of whom will go for a meal, buy flowers, or rent hotel rooms, providing business for local companies. A recent study on the Pittsburgh Symphony, demonstrates that, [for every dollar the symphony spends, it generate four dollars in the local economy](#). The Hawai'i Symphony Orchestra impacts our local businesses in much the same way.

SB-441-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/25/2025 3:40:59 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/27/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
David Monk	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

As season subscribers for many years, my wife Amy and I value the Hawaii Symphony Orchestra as a precious jewel of this state's performing arts scene. In addition to the high-quality performances across multiple musical genres, the HSO's members serve as the base for music education and training to enrich the lives of our keiki and plant the seeds of future performers and music lovers. Ticket sales are never sufficient to fund an arts organization of this caliber. The official recognition and support embodied in this bill are proper acknowledgment of the key role HSO plays in our state's cultural life. We urge its passage.

March 25, 2025

RE: SB441 SD1 HD1

I write in strong support of SB441, which would designate the Hawai'i Symphony Orchestra as the state orchestra.

I was born and raised in Honolulu but left the islands after high school to study music on the mainland. After 15 years of studying, working, teaching, and performing, I felt a deep pull to return home to be with my family. Since returning to Hawai'i as a professional musician with diverse performing and teaching experiences, I have come to understand my responsibility in contributing to the continued legacy of classical music here. Many of the musicians I looked up to, respected, and learned from in my youth have now become my colleagues. Their influence shaped me, and I now carry the torch to inspire and mentor the next generation.

In addition to performing with the Hawai'i Symphony Orchestra as Acting Associate Principal Oboe, I serve as the Oboe Lecturer at the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa and regularly work with younger students through the Hawai'i Youth Symphony. It is clear that our community, especially our youth, needs access to music education and classical music.

By designating the Hawai'i Symphony Orchestra as the official state orchestra, we can strengthen its foundation and expand its reach to a broader audience. Hawai'i is rich in diverse cultures, and this bill will help the orchestra continue to contribute to our state's history, tradition, and artistic legacy.

I respectfully urge you to support SB441.

Mahalo,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Alex Hayashi', with a large, sweeping flourish at the end.

Alex Hayashi, D.M.A.

Acting Associate Principal Oboe, Hawai'i Symphony Orchestra
Lecturer in Music, Oboe, University of Hawai'i at Manoa

SB-441-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/25/2025 3:55:58 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/27/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Randy Howard	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

If we only have commercially viable music supported, we will just have music that is a commercial for the performer's brand.

Oh. That *is* exactly what motivates most self-sustaining (profitable) music today. Music must be more than just commerce.

SB-441-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/25/2025 4:43:24 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/27/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kendrick Chang	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Takenouchi, and Finance Committee Members:

I write in my personal capacity to express support for SB 411 to designate the Hawai‘i Symphony Orchestra as the State of Hawai‘i Symphony Orchestra.

Over the years, I've attended a number of Hawai‘i Symphony Orchestra ("HSO") concerts at Hawai‘i Theatre and always been impressed by the high-quality performances of our local musicians. I share multi-generational familial ties to the Fort Street Mall and Chinatown business district and currently serve as a Trustee of the United Chinese Society of Hawai‘i. HSO's presence at Hawai‘i Theatre brings our community together and in turn supports many of our small businesses (e.g., restaurants and retailers) in Fort Street Mall and Chinatown. As a result, HSO is an economic driver that aligns with the current vision to revitalize business and community opportunities in the urban Honolulu District. As a result, State investment in the HSO will yield broader economic benefits for many of our small businesses.

I kindly urge that the committee advance SB 441 for further consideration in conference committee.

Best,
Kendrick S. Chang

SB-441-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/25/2025 4:46:53 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/27/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
robert Rodman	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

The Hawaii Symphony Orchestra just performed Beethoven's 9th Symphony to a sold out Concert Hall. This demonstrates the value of live music. Help them expand their venues thru the state with this funding. Thanks.

SB-441-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/25/2025 4:55:08 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/27/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Maria Jesus Escobar	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

The art of music is strong in Hawai'i from the folkloric roots through interpretation of various local artist. It is this talent, discipline and beauty of its music that makes Hawai'i a musical place to visit. Hawai'i being a city of tourism, the arts and music, it will be enhanced by orchestral interpretation of of musica music from all venues of the globe and having its own Hawai'i Orquestra as an anchor to music festivals and artist presentations bringing more recognition in the international arena.

SB-441-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/25/2025 5:17:25 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/27/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Renate C Ryan	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

HSO is a world class orchestra that we can be proud of

it uplifts our spirits

As a kupuna I am no longer able to travel to major cultural centers

it is important for our Citizens and especially our keiki to have this great musical venue in Hawaii

SB-441-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/25/2025 5:25:52 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/27/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Sean Kauhini	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

The Hawaii Symphony Orchestra (HSO) is a valuable cultural asset for the state. As an active performer and composer residing in Hawaii, I believe that a vibrant and inspiring symphony as the HSO is vital not only for Hawaii's arts scene and economy, but also for the education of our keiki. I fully support this measure, which would appropriate a portion of the state's general revenues to the operating costs of the HSO.

SB-441-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/25/2025 5:46:37 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/27/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Andrea Snyder	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

We are in favor of SB441 in support of the Hawai`i Symphony Orchestra (HSO) designation as the state orchestra of the Hawai`i. We have been moved by the music from Blaisdell Concert Hall to Hawai`i Theatre to Kailua District Park and to the Waikiki Shell. The HSO brings people together, from different backgrounds and stages of life, to share the unique experience of live music.

Thank you,

Andrea and Bob Snyder, 1288 Alal Moana Blved. #24G, Honolulu 96814

SB-441-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/25/2025 5:48:39 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/27/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Lorna Holmes	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I write in very strong support of SB441. As a lifelong lover of music, I know that it embodies the joy and beauty of the best of human culture, and the Hawaii Symphony Orchestra does this in a uniquely local way. Our keiki should grow up able to hear live music and be inspired to play instruments. The orchestra is a treasure which enriches us all. Please give it the public support it deserves.

Mahalo for your attention,

Dr. Lorna Holmes

Honolulu 96817

SB-441-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/25/2025 6:07:00 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/27/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Marcia M. Nagao	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly support SB 441, designating the Hawaii Symphony Orchestra as the State of Hawaii Symphony Orchestra. Founded in 1900, the Hawaii Symphony Orchestra (formerly known as the Honolulu Symphony Orchestra) is one of the oldest orchestras in the U.S. west of the Rocky Mountains. The Hawaii Symphony Orchestra is a vital part of our community, bringing people together through performances at the Hawaii Theatre and Neil S. Blaisdell Concert Hall, as well as through educational outreach programs. Symphonic music is a universal language, transcending barriers of age, race, and background, connecting us on an emotional level. Symphonic music has the ability to enrich and enhance our lives, and inspire future generations of artists. The Hawaii Symphony Orchestra is a cultural treasure, worth investing in and protecting. Please support this institution to ensure symphonic music continues to be available for future generations.

Thank you,

Marcia M. Nagao

SB-441-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/25/2025 6:15:59 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/27/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Richard E. Duggan	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

My wife and I are supporters of the HSO for 30 years. It is an integral member of Hawaii's artistic and educational structure that brings live, unforgettable masterpieces to us and our visitors. Please support it.

SB-441-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/25/2025 6:31:19 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/27/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Robert Wilhelm	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

The Hawaii Symphony Orchestra (HSO) is a real treasure for the State and deserves our support and also merits recognition as the State Orchestra of Hawaii. One advantage of SB 441 is that it would allow HSO to perform in several of the outer islands where there is great interest and adequate performing venues. Currently, HSO performs mostly on Oahu, but this bill would engender fund raising on other islands and thus facilitate the fulfillment of the name-- a truly Hawaiian, not just Honolulu, orchestra.

In the last few months HSO has performed all of Beethoven symphonies culminating with a wonderful 9th that filled Blaisdell to standing ovations from the audience. But to demonstrate the breadth of HSO's capabilities, this weekend they will perform the music from Star Wars to what will likely be sell out crowds.

I am a strong supporter of HSO and hope SB441 will pass and thereby add to the support of HSO.

SB-441-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/25/2025 6:32:21 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/27/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
GWEN YOUNG	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

As a resident of Honolulu, with strong conviction, I believe that Hawai'i Symphony Orchestra is invaluable to the state of Hawai'i. Our 'ohana and friends gather to attend the symphony at the Hawaii Theatre, The Blaisdell Center, The Shell in Waikiki, in Kailua Park, and once at the Barn in Kaka'ako. We benefit in so many ways with the depth and breadth of the musical experiences. The local communities, businesses, and keiki to kupuna are enriched culturally and economically by having the HYSO. We also grow community and get to escape to and celebrate the beauty of music and art that HYSO provides.

The gift of music is critical to enrich our lives and culture state wide, especially during these uncertain times where financial support to arts, education, diverse cultures, and musical styles has become scarce or threatened. Censorship of music, now the norm at the Kennedy Theatre in New York, threatens all of us nationwide.

Please support [SB441 SD1 HD1](#), which would give HSO the designation as the state orchestra of Hawai'i and provide critical funding during these uncertain time. This will allow Hawaii to continue as a state that cultivates beauty, art, and music from diverse and extremely talented musicians and performers.

Thank you, Gwen Young

SB-441-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/25/2025 6:40:01 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/27/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Wendy Asato	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dear Representative Yamashita:

In these uncertain economic times, when certain politicians are only looking narrowl-mindedly at the bottom line, it is important to continue to support the fine arts, including the Hawaii Symphony Orchestra. Not only does the HSO provide much need employment to local citizens (hard working, tax paying citizens) but to the support staff, the concert hall, the surrounding neighborhood restaurants, etc. The joy that the symphony brings to concert goers makes life worth living for! The Romans knew to provide entertainment for the masses. This entertainment will bring a sense of peace and enlightenment that cannot be provided with other kinds of music or sports. It makes for better citizens that for the reward of listening to such great music, would be willing to tighten our belts elsewhere.

Please support funding for the Hawaii Symphony Orchestra!

Aloha,

Wendy Asato

SB-441-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/25/2025 6:47:22 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/27/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Gregory L Young	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly support SB 441 to designate Hawaii Symphony Orchestra (HSO) as the official State orchestra. HSO is a vital part of our community that brings together people of all walks of life. In these current times of economic uncertainty and political turmoil, a unifying entity such as HSO is more important than ever. When people attend a HSO event, they all have a common love of music. All other differences are put aside, and people mix together and hopefully realize that we can all get along once we find some common ground.

In addition to unifying people with a common love of music, HSO is vital to the local economy. People who attend HSO events contribute to local businesses: restaurants, shops, and parking. These local businesses benefit greatly from HSO events. Thriving local businesses are critical for a healthy Honolulu downtown.

Mahalo for your time.

Greg

SB-441-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/25/2025 6:50:20 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/27/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Lawrence Shaw	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

To the Finance Committee:

I am writing this testimony to express my support for the Hawaii Symphony Orchestra (HSO) to be designated as the state orchestra of Hawaii. HSO serves the community through the artistic excellence of its performances. Educational and advancement initiatives are served by its outreach programs and association with other performing arts organization such as Hawaii Opera Theater and Hawaii Youth Symphony. HSO is a highly important and valuable asset to the State of Hawaii and this designation would serve to recognize its value to the community.

Respectfully submitted.

Lawrence Shaw

SB-441-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/25/2025 7:19:07 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/27/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Lauralee Dice	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support **SB441 SD1 HD1**. Music has always been a part of my life since I was a child. Being a participant in school bands shaped me as a high academic, performing student and leader within our band and school.

Having the example of the Hawaii Symphony Orchestra for students like myself inspired us in our own musical journey and helped open our minds up to possibilities.

I know that the orchestra music inspired me, helped me through challenging times and helped connect me with others at concert venues.

Continual support of the Hawaii Symphony Orchestra through funding helps our state and continues the legacy. It helps our children, it helps top musicians stay in state, it helps bring revenues up in other sectors such as restaurants and stores prior to and after concerts.

To Whom It May Concern:

Testimony in support of Senate Bill SB441

I have been a supporter of the orchestra in Hawaii for many years and most recently have been honored to be on the board of the Hawai'i Symphony Orchestra. Under the careful management of Amy Iwano, Dane Lam and the board, the orchestra is thriving and making beautiful music. HSO is so important to the Hawaiian Islands. We have recently kicked off the Beethoven festival and all 9 Symphonies are were performed in a short time period. Quite a feat. But HSO is also accessible to all of Hawaii with free park and outdoor community concerts and free education concerts including Symphony of Hawaiian Birds and Symphony of the Hawaii Forests. We employ some of the United States' finest musicians to play in the HSO while they also are critical in the vital role of education our children.

In a time where federal spending is uncertain the bill is important for garner support of a valuable community asset.

Respectfully,

Tyrie Jenkins, MD

SB-441-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/25/2025 8:29:40 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/27/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Emma Votapek	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am writing in support of SB 441 SD 1 HD 1, which would designate the Hawai‘i Symphony Orchestra as the State of Hawai‘i Symphony Orchestra. I joined the HSO in 2004, and some of my favorite experiences have been during outreach efforts that really underscored that we were serving the whole state of Hawai‘i: making weekly trips to Nānākuli to work with elementary school students, and then welcoming them to Blaisdell Concert Hall to make music with us; playing for a packed house in a Hilo community concert led by Aaron Mahi; playing school shows on neighbor islands for students who had never seen a violin up close.

The HSO has strong artistic and executive leadership in place who are committed to expanding our reach in the community through free concerts, collaborations with other arts organizations, and concert series that showcase local talent, but my colleagues and I would like to do even more. Now called the Hawai‘i Symphony, we have both the desire and the kuleana to live up to that name, to demonstrate that we are Hawai‘i’s orchestra. SB 441 would help make that possible, and so I ask for your support of this bill.

SB-441-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/25/2025 8:43:25 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/27/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jean mcIntosh	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

A symphony orchestra adds so much value to a community. Businesses prefer to locate in a community that supports cultural institutions, which provide

entertainment, music education, sophistication.

SB-441-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/25/2025 8:51:48 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/27/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
John Berry	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

As a recent retiree who has relocated to the beautiful state of Hawaii and a former US Ambassador to Australia from 2013-2016, I have thoroughly enjoyed the Hawai'i Symphony Orchestra and appreciate their centrality to advancing music, the arts and serving every precious element of our community from Keiki to Kapuna. After living in NYC for the previous 8 years, I can honestly attest that the 80 plus musicians are truly world class and the visionary conductor, Dane Lam, is one of the greatest gifts that Australia could ever share with our great country. I attended every concert of the recent Beethoven Festival and witnessed the amazing energy, creativity, precision and innovation that this Orchestra delivered to full houses of very grateful citizens who leapt to their feet every evening. Each performance brought a completely fresh interpretation that took my breath away and inspired whole new generations with the power of live music to uplift the soul and inspire hearts and minds in a truly unique way. Our community is better and stronger because of this critically important institution. Please support this essential legislation! John Berry

SB-441-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/25/2025 9:21:48 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/27/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jacqueline Beckman	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am a inspiring fellow traveler on this journey to see the Hawai'i Symphony Orchestra recognized for the crucial role it plays in the life of the state. I am a Supporter of the arts and the Honolulu Symphony!

SB-441-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/25/2025 9:38:41 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/27/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Daniela Jendly	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

If I could choose between seeing any good concert I would always choose first to go to listen to the Hawai'i Symphony ...there I get energy , there I feel my heart and my body start to relax and fills my whole body mind and spirit which supports to keep going moving forward even when lives is all a bit chaotic yet a evening or afternoon listing to this fabouls talented Orchestra is a real treat. I brought 2 weeks ago an elderly friend with me who lives in NY and know classical music in an out. He could not believe how strong this Symphony is he was in awe and very positive surprised and he told me bevore I go back to NY I want to go back one more time to hear themhe said I felt so good afterwards . Please support them it is not just supporting them put then whole community you will support.

SB-441-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/25/2025 10:22:45 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/27/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Daintry Bartoldus	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Testimony in Support of SB441 – Orchestra Funding in Hawai‘i

Aloha Chair and Committee Members,

My name is Daintry Bartoldus I am testifying as a private citizen. I am writing in strong support of SB441, which supports orchestras and the performing arts in Hawai‘i.

I believe this bill is incredibly important because having a live orchestra in Hawai‘i Theater enriches our cultural landscape and gives our community access to world-class music and artistic experiences. Orchestras inspire creativity, bring people together across generations, and offer opportunities for local musicians and youth to thrive.

Attending the orchestra for several years, I have seen how music can uplift a community. Whether it’s a school field trip to the theater or a family night out, the power of live orchestral music leaves a lasting impression. We need to make sure these experiences are available to future generations.

I’m thankful that lawmakers are considering this measure. Supporting the orchestra means supporting education, local jobs, the arts, and the soul of our islands.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

Respectfully,

Daintry

SB-441-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/25/2025 11:09:26 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/27/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Katherine Kane	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Such an Inspiring Orchestra ! With So many different instruments playing in Beautiful Harmony together , lead by Such a Caring, Dedicated Conductor !

What a Fabulous Testament and Inspiration of World Peace !!!

Yes to HSO !!!!!

SB-441-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/26/2025 1:04:12 AM

Testimony for FIN on 3/27/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Raimar Bylaardt II	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha!

I support SB441 SD1 HD1 and request your consideration and support as well because the HSO is an important organization not only for our economy but also culturally, bring people from different backgrounds together.

Thank you. Sincerely,

Raimar Bylaardt II

SB-441-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/26/2025 1:59:17 AM

Testimony for FIN on 3/27/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
John Phillip Nelson	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

John Phillip and Angeline Nelson

1133 Waimanu St Apt 2202

Honolulu, HI 96814

808-753-4821

jpknelson@gmail.com

Subject: Testimony for SB441 SD1 HD1

House Finance Committee - March 27, 2025

Aloha Representative Yamashita and Finance Committee Members,

Thank you very much for the opportunity to submit testimony in support of our Hawai'i Symphony Orchestra (HSO). My wife and I are constituents of House District 25 and Senate District 12.

We are monetary supporters of HSO and regularly attend HSO concerts and events at venues around Honolulu, including the Blaisdell Concert Hall, Hawai'i Theatre Center, Waikiki Shell, and many special productions presented in high schools and public areas around the city. We were very happy to hear that designation of HSO as our state's orchestra had been introduced.

HSO deserves our state's full support and funding and we would consider use of this appropriation to be prudent and appropriately directed. Our hope is this designation leads to our world class orchestra performing throughout the state and ask for help in expanding access to HSO to the islands of Hawai'i, Maui, Lanai, Molokai, Kauai, and Niihau. Exposure and access to HSO provides educational, cultural, and spiritual benefits. It feels good to sit and listen to a performance, whether one recognizes a particular piece or not. To boot, though, Dane Lam and Michael Thomas Foumai and the principals, do such a wonderful job of talking directly with us as spectators to help us appreciate and understand performances, whether classic or new alike. Our HSO truly cares about serving us quality and enriching experiences.

Please sustain this singular and valuable resource. HSO is Hawai'i's orchestra.

We respectfully ask for your vote on this bill, JP and Angie

SB-441-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/26/2025 2:02:31 AM

Testimony for FIN on 3/27/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
James Moffitt	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

I stongly urge support of SB 441 which would offically designate the Hawai'i Symphony Orchestra as the State Orchestra of Hawai'i.

This bill wpuld allocate funding to allow the HSO to continue to present and expand on providing over 50 diverse cocnerts annually, free park and Community concerts; free Education concerts, including sending smaller numbers of musicians into classrooms to work one on one with students; side by side concerts with the Hawai'i Youth Symphony students; Masterworks concerts, where the HSO presents the world's greatest artists, and the HAPA concerts, where the HSO works with Hawai'i's most revered musicians.

The Hawai'i Symphony Orchestra is the largest employer of professional musicians, who are some of the fiinest musicians in the Country.

Sincerely,

James Moffitt, President

Musicians" Association of Hawai'i

SB-441-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/26/2025 2:04:41 AM

Testimony for FIN on 3/27/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jennifer Chiwa	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Representative Yamashita, Vice Chair Representative Takenouchi and Members of the Committee on Finance.

Please vote for SB 441 SD 1 HD 1 which I strongly support. I have donated for several years to the Hawaii Symphony Orchestra and currently am a member making automatic monthly donations. The Orchestra is made up of dedicated, wonderful musicians who perpetuate and perform beautifully both classical and contemporary music.

I attended the Orchestra's recent performance of Beethoven's 9th Symphony with the Oahu Choral Society. This performance also included a piece by a local composer, Dai-Keong Lee. This concert had many attendees who enthusiastically gave the Orchestra a standing ovation.

I hope that, with the State's support, the Orchestra will be able to provide more concerts throughout the community at a small or no cost. They kindly provided a free concert at the end of the current season.

The Hawaii Symphony Orchestra transports, uplifts, enriches us with their music. Please help them to reach more people and to continue transporting uplifting, enriching us.

Mahalo.

Jennifer Chiwa

Makiki and life long resident of Oahu

SB-441-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/26/2025 2:36:28 AM

Testimony for FIN on 3/27/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Anna Lenhart	Hawaii Symphony Orchestra	Support	In Person

Comments:

Aloha, my name is Anna Lenhart. In 2018, I moved to Hawai'i after winning the symphony's principal horn audition. I brought with me 15 years of training from world renowned musical institutions.

Hawai'i was meant to be a short-term job for me, a small steppingstone on the path to a larger, well-funded orchestra.

But Hawai'i deserves better than being a rotating door for upcoming musicians.

By designating the HSO as the State of Hawai'i Symphony Orchestra, you are inviting highly trained musicians to stay.

To stay for the quiet keiki who find their voice through music.

To stay for the kapuna who sing along to our Christmas carols at their retirement centers.

To stay for the woman who whispered an awestruck "wow" into the silence after we finished a Beethoven symphony.

To stay and build community.

With our current resources, we can't provide our soul-healing music to everyone who wants it.

SB441 will enable us musicians to not only stay in Hawai'i but to expand our influence to neighbor islands and underserved communities.

Thank you for helping us help your constituents.

SB-441-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/26/2025 2:56:39 AM

Testimony for FIN on 3/27/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kara Snow	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am a former Hawaii citizen and sorely missed not having a symphony orchestra in the state for a period of time when I lived there. I return about twice a year to visit family and we make it a point to support HSO when we are in town. Live classical music is something our children and future generations should enjoy and should be accessible in the community.

SB-441-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/26/2025 3:03:06 AM

Testimony for FIN on 3/27/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Judy Anderson	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Classical music had a lasting favorable impact on my life from childhood on - it gave me a focus which caused me to spend my time in a positive way, rather than get caught up in less beneficial pursuits. Now, as a Senior, classical music programs - the Hawai'i Symphony Orchestra specifically - is my FIRST choice for my limited entertainment dollars. I would appreciate the most availability and affordability possible.

SB-441-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/26/2025 4:21:20 AM

Testimony for FIN on 3/27/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Robert Wo	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

My name is Robert Wo, and I am an individual citizen of Hawaii.

I strongly support SB441 SD1 HD1.

Our community needs and deserves a world class orchestra, and we are blessed to have one!
SB441 wouldgive HSO the designation as the state orchestra of Hawaii and would come with
direct funding of the orchestra from the state.

Please support SB 441.....thank you for your consideration.

SB-441-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/26/2025 6:38:09 AM

Testimony for FIN on 3/27/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Margaret ANN Renick	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Mahalo for passing this bill, ensuring funding for one of our treasured organizations!

SB-441-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/26/2025 6:57:57 AM

Testimony for FIN on 3/27/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Barney Brennan	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

Please join me in supporting SB441!

The Hawai'i Symphony Orchestra is an incredible source of education, inspiration, and joy for our community. I have had the pleasure of interacting with the organization as a parent, volunteer, and donor and have been extremely impressed with the goals and motivations of the organization.

My daughter was involved in the Hawai'i Youth Symphony and had the opportunity to interact with the very skilled and welcoming staff and musicians of the HSO. She was so moved by her experience that she created an internship with the team as a high school senior project and has stayed connected, returning to volunteer over summer and college breaks. She has been supported and encouraged to grow her passion for music and has had the benefit of taking lessons from HSO musicians. She has met and had meaningful interactions with visiting international artists here to perform with the HSO. Truly amazing opportunities that would have never existed without the HSO. She is now a music focused college student playing in chamber, wind, and baroque ensembles.

As a volunteer, I have been able to witness first-hand the motivations and passion of this organization and their commitment to our community. They refer to the the HSO as "your Hawai'i Symphony", and they are stewards that respect the responsibility of providing world class art and entertainment for the community. We are so fortunate to have a team that has the vision to be a Pacific force for the advancement of symphonic music and incorporating the authentic voices of our island nations in their Hapa Series of collaborations. They are cultural leaders and positive representatives that deserve the honor of being the State Orchestra of Hawai'i.

My family is proud to support the HSO as we can afford, and work to share the joy of the performance experience with our friends and co-workers. Seeing what the HSO is able to achieve with current resources just makes me so excited to think of the possibilities with the support of the Hawai'i Legislature.

Please join me in supporting SB 441 and the Hawai'i Symphony Orchestra...truly deserving of becoming YOUR State Orchestra of Hawai'i!!

SB-441-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/26/2025 7:38:29 AM

Testimony for FIN on 3/27/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Lily Ling	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support SB441. Just like the Royal Hawaiian Band that receives financial support from the City and County of Honolulu, our local symphony also deserves government support. Humanity cannot flourish without art and culture. Providing financial support to the symphony is a symbol and pledge that art is important to this community. Music bridges and brings people together, in good times or bad. I have traveled to many states within the union and to other countries. Almost every vibrant city has a strong symphony or orchestra to call its own. I urge the committee to pass SB411. Mahalo Nui

SB-441-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/26/2025 7:50:50 AM

Testimony for FIN on 3/27/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
STEVEN J PROCTOR	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I cannot think of a great world state that does not have a fantastic art museum, a thriving university, and a great symphony orchestra.

Of course, an orchestra is a net positive for a thriving economy. We serve tens of thousands of audiences each year, many of whom will go for a meal, buy flowers, or rent hotel rooms, providing business for local companies. A recent study on the Pittsburgh Symphony, demonstrates that, [for every dollar the symphony spends, it generate four dollars in the local economy](#). The Hawai'i Symphony Orchestra impacts our local businesses in much the same way.

With the funding that would come from SB441 SD1 HD1, your Hawai'i Symphony Orchestra can touch more people in more places throughout the state of Hawai'i; building communities from keiki to kupuna.

SB-441-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/26/2025 7:51:23 AM

Testimony for FIN on 3/27/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Ignace Jang	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dear FIN Committee,

Employed by the Hawaii Symphony Orchestra (HSO), I joined the organization in 1997 and truly believe its leadership, board, volunteers, staff and musicians to be genuine and essential cultural ambassadors of the State. I was fortunate, as a member of HSO, to fulfill our mission on Oahu, Maui, Hawai'i and Kauai over time. To cherish our islands and all they encompass, the musical voice of HSO is paramount. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Iggy Jang

SB-441-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/26/2025 7:55:39 AM

Testimony for FIN on 3/27/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Chris Bayot	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Thank you for the opportunity to submit this testimony. The Hawaii Symphony Orchestra (HSO) is an integral part of our community and deserves to receive the support that would be provided through SB441 SD1 HD1. HSO strives to support our entire community by offering free performances as well as ticketed performances, and it has been shown that an investment in a local symphony brings critical dollars into the community. This was evidenced by last season's Hapa Symphony opener, Johnny Valentine. Fans travelled from Japan, Canada, Florida, California, and the East Coast just to see that concert. Locals came into town to enjoy a nice dinner before the show, and The Lei Stand across the street from the Hawaii Theatre hosted a standing room only crowd following the show. This is only one example of how HSO supports our local businesses.

Perhaps even more importantly, this institution elevates the people of Hawaii through its enriching programming and contributions to the community. The passage of SB441 will help ensure that this critical program is sustainable and available to the people of our islands.

Mahalo nui loa for voting yes on SB441,

Chris C. Bayot
Mililani, HI

SB-441-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/26/2025 8:53:32 AM

Testimony for FIN on 3/27/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Eileen Y Uchima	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dear Representative Yamashita and Members of the House Finance Committee,

I am writing as a professional musician and music teacher who was born and raised in Hawaii and has been attending concerts by the Honolulu Symphony (later Hawaii Symphony) since the 1960s. My father, the late Floyd Uchima, was bassoon principal with the orchestra at that time and also active as a high school band director. He went on to guide many of the careers of aspiring band directors as a professor of music at UH Manoa.

<https://manoa.hawaii.edu/music/about-us/faculty/floyd-uchima/>

As a citizen of Hawaii and music teacher for 40+ years who seeks to inspire young people to create and perpetuate the art of music, the Hawaii Symphony plays a vital role in presenting concerts which demonstrate musical excellence. By presenting concert series encompassing a variety of musical genres, the orchestra consistently strives to present programs that appeal to a wide audience. As a school music teacher, I have attended many youth concerts with my elementary music students over the years and continue to encourage parents to attend HSO concerts with their children. I believe that providing opportunities to hear musical performances of high quality played live is vital to perpetuating the art of music in our society. Please consider the importance of music in our lives and the role of the Hawaii Symphony Orchestra in perpetuating the art of music in Hawaii.

Respectfully,

Eileen Uchima

SB-441-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/26/2025 9:01:28 AM

Testimony for FIN on 3/27/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Joseph A Walker	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dear Legislators,

I am a part time resident of Maui, a long time music enthusiast, advocate and donor, and serve on several non-profit music organization boards including being chair of New Music USA, a nationwide commissioning organization. I would like to voice my strong support for Hawai'i Symphony Orchestra. What a tremendous resource for Hawai'i. I recently attended a concert and was greatly impressed by the quality of the performance and overall experience. It is truly world class. I look forward to attending more in the future and also hope they can expand there performances to Maui. Thank you very much for your consideration.

SB-441-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/26/2025 9:04:13 AM

Testimony for FIN on 3/27/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Alma M. Nagao	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am writing to ask for your support of SB441 SD1 HD1 to give the Hawaii Symphony Orchestra the designation as the State Orchestra of Hawaii and provide funding. I realize that at this time of economic undertainty there are many avenues of need.

Our community needs a great Symphony orchestra. With the support of this bill the orchestra can enrich the lives of not only Oahu residents but those of the neighbor islands as well as the students in our schools. The symphony has provided family concerts in Oahu communities and this could be extended to the neighbor islands to touch more people in more places throughout the State. They have introduced the community to prominent guest musicians. They have introduced students to play with the Symphony musicians. With your support we hope that the Symphony programs can continue and help to inspire our citizens and students to love and preserve the art of music.

My husband and I are former residents of Maui, graduates of Lahainaluna High School and the University of Hawaii. Music has always played an important part in our lives. For years we have enjoyed and supported our Hawaii Symphony Orchestra. Because of our physical limitations we are unable to attend the concerts but feel that the Symphony should continue its great work of enriching the lives of the citizens of Hawaii.

Please help us support this bill. Thank you!

SB-441-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/26/2025 9:10:59 AM

Testimony for FIN on 3/27/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Mark A Heberle	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dear State Legislators:

I am writing in strongest support of Bill 441 to rename the present Hawai'i Symphony Orchestra as the State of Hawai'i Symphony Orchestra and to authorize legislature-approved funding for the Orchestra.

In my earlier written testimony submitted on March 12, I emphasized the extraordinary, world-class quality of the present orchestra as directed by its brilliant young Australian-Chinese conductor and music director, Dane Lam. Not only has the orchestra this year magnificently presented the entire cycle of Beethoven symphonies in five single concerts as well as the best performances of Mahler's Fourth and Fifth Symphonies I have ever heard (in addition to other traditional classical works), but Maestro Lam has also conducted Honolulu or world premieres of nearly a dozen Hawaiian, Pacific, and/or Asian works by composers from our half of the world (appropriate for a conductor who has also been music director of the Xian China Symphony Orchestra and the Queensland Australia Opera Company.) In addition to showcasing the work(s) of Michael-Thomas Foumai, a young local composer fully involved in the orchestra's offerings and outreach programs this year, the current HSO also provides Pop Symphony concerts for our island communities as well as extensive collaborations with school orchestras and student musicians and musical ensembles. (One example that I witnessed were the wonderful on-stage solo performances by three award-winning high school musicians during the first part of the awesome Mahler Fifth performance this summer at the Shell). In forty-plus years of enjoying Hawai'i/Honolulu Symphony concerts, I have never heard or seen any that ever matched what the current HSO and its dynamic conductor are providing all of us in terms of musical excellence and community outreach.

Because the current HSO seems to me a living treasure that all of us here are encouraged and enabled to enjoy and to support, the proposed name change, which binds the orchestra with the communities that it both serves and depends upon for its existence, seems absolutely right. Under such circumstances, government funding of some kind that would honor both the state and its world-class orchestra seems appropriate (and perhaps necessary.) It would not diminish but encourage private contributions like my own. As a retired UH Mnoa professor living on my pension, Social Security, and my wife's part-time teaching, I will be honored to give the HSO \$500 this year, matching my largest previous personal contribution (to the Hawai'i Community Foundation for Maui). I see both as investments in what makes our islands a better place to live for all of us.

Mark Heberle

SB-441-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/26/2025 9:34:35 AM

Testimony for FIN on 3/27/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Gene Corpuz	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dear Committee:

I am urging you to support SB441 SDI. The Hawaii Symphony Orchestra contributes much to the cultural life in Hawaii. Music uplifts the spirit and brings a feeling of peace and well-being to listeners. HSO also does outreach to the Neighbor Islands contributing to the music experience throughout the whole state. Their collaborations with youth orchestra provides training for young musicians.

I am a member of the Oahu Choral Society, the premier chorus in Hawaii. I am the Tenor Section Leader and had the experience singing with the OCS as we performed Beethoven's 9th Symphony with HSO. It was an uplifting experience singing to a packed Blaisdell Concert Hall audience. The rousing standing ovation showed the appreciation of the people for this excellent orchestra.

Again, I urge you to support SB441 SD1. Mahalo.

Sincerely,

Gene Corpuz

1624 Dole St. Apt 1503

Honolulu, HI 96822

SB-441-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/26/2025 9:43:32 AM

Testimony for FIN on 3/27/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Flora Ling	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

We absolutely love the Hawaii Symphony. Please help keep the tradition of classical music alive and well. I hope every keiki will have the opportunity to learn to appreciate music the way I did on school trips. The magnificence and beauty made an impression that only deepened as I grew to adulthood.

mahalo,

flora ling

SB-441-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/26/2025 9:53:23 AM

Testimony for FIN on 3/27/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Nancy Masaki	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

To whom it may concern:

I was lucky enough to join the Honolulu Symphony in 1968 as a junior in high school. Maestro Robert La Marchina offered me and 2 other high school friends an opportunity to play as members of the Honolulu Symphony while still in high school. We have all continued in music, taking time to complete degrees in music and have returned to Honolulu to resume performing with the Hawai'i Symphony Orchestra while sharing our accrued knowledge with young students.

As the owner of the Masaki School of Music, many of our 600+ students attend concerts by the Hawai'i Symphony and share with me their enthusiasm following each concert, be it classical, a showcase of Hawaiian artists, educational, community based, contemporary featuring video game music or soundtracks from movies. What the Hawai'i Symphony does for our community is not duplicated by any other organization in our State. Our students are blessed with high level instruction from masterful musicians of the Hawai'i Symphony who have devoted their lives to music and remain steadfast even as they struggle to make ends meet.

My life has been blessed with music and the Honolulu and Hawai'i Symphony Orchestras have always been a part of my life. My mother was Ellen Masaki, a piano teacher who devoted her life to music and to her students. She knew the importance of having a professional orchestra in Hawai'i and regularly held fundraisers for the orchestra with her students, many of whom had the privilege of performing with the Honolulu Symphony. The orchestra sets high standards and its influence can be heard in our young musicians, many of whom are members of the Hawai'i Youth Symphony. You cannot have one without the other and, with the passage of this Bill, the Hawai'i Symphony will have additional resources at its disposal to stabilize and grow this truly great orchestra for the people of Hawai'i.

Designating the Hawai'i Symphony as the State Orchestra of Hawai'i is a way to share this gem of the Pacific with our neighboring islands with hopes that they will also want to nurture and share in the growth of this magnificent musical entity that has the power to inspire, educate and cultivate high artistic values within our communities. Children who have been touched by the magic of music usually stay the course and find satisfaction as they develop their technical skills and musical aptitude.

The musicians of the Hawai'i Symphony are highly trained and are an invaluable asset for our community. Our symphony musicians teach hundreds of Hawai'i's youth and encourage them to join their school orchestras and the Hawai'i Youth Symphony. Students who do well in music usually do well in school and are sought after by institutions of higher education. It is a win-win situation.

Performing in a professional orchestra is very demanding, filled with challenges and high expectations. There is very little time to rehearse and put together polished performances week after week. Fortunately, we have found a great leader in Maestro Dane Lam. In the short time he has been onboard he has energized and whipped the orchestra into an ensemble with a powerful, unified voice skilled at delivering the music of the great and familiar composers while also welcoming compositions of living composers. He fully embraces our local artists and traditions and showcases them regularly performing with the Hawai'i Symphony. Not only is Dane Lam a visionary who can plan for an exciting and innovative future for our orchestra but he has successfully found a bridge to our audiences through his sincere down-to-earth demeanor. He is a keeper!

This is an exciting time for the Hawai'i Symphony and your support will help us retain our musicians and our new Maestro Dane Lam.

Thank you for considering the passage of this bill.

Respectfully submitted,

Nancy Masaki

Masaki School of Music, owner/president

Hawai'i Symphony Orchestra, cellist

SB-441-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/26/2025 9:56:54 AM

Testimony for FIN on 3/27/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Victor Brock	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support this bill.

SB-441-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/26/2025 10:09:43 AM

Testimony for FIN on 3/27/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kate Reimann	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Our family, residents of Kailua for eight years now, loves the Hawai'i Symphony Orchestra. One of our best memories was last summer, when my brother, a big Jurassic Park fan, came to visit and we picked him up from the airport and drove him to the Waikiki Shell to watch Jurassic Park under the stars with the HSO -- this love he had for Jurassic Park and shares with my two boys, his nephews, was doubled by the experience. We've watched the HSO do the same for A Muppet Christmas Carol, alongside our two boys, making special memories as a family while exposing our kids to culture, music, and the arts. I've sat in the grass under another starry night with a friend listening to the HSO while the breeze blew through the palm trees. Calming, inspiring, curative. We support SB441 SD1 HD1 in the hopes that it will continue to inspire our community, build new connections, and strengthen old. Please consider passage of this bill to enshrine our arts and their future, for our kids, and the generation to come. Thank you. Kate Reimann, Kailua.

SB-441-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/26/2025 10:15:57 AM

Testimony for FIN on 3/27/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Karen Nally	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I fully support SB 441. The Hawaii Symphony Orchestra provides a superb cultural experience. In addition, it contributes to the state and local economies. I visit from the Big Island and had season tickets for the Beethoven series in addition to other concerts. Hawaii should be proud and supportive of the HSO as it is a unique gem. My attendance at the HSO musical venues has contributed to our airlines, hotels, restaurants, museums, Ubers, and shops.



26 March 2025

Dear Chair Yamashita and members of the Senate Committee,

I am writing to express my wholehearted and enthusiastically strong endorsement of Senate Bill 441 SD1 HD1 (SB441) and its critical support for the Hawai'i Symphony Orchestra (HSO). As a faculty member at the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa (UHM) Music Department, I have seen firsthand how vital the HSO is to the cultural, educational, and artistic development of our community, particularly in supporting the next generation of musicians and artists. SB441 will help ensure that the Hawai'i Symphony Orchestra continues to be a major resource for our students, local musicians, and the broader public across Hawaii.

The HSO offers a remarkable array of performances that bring world-class music to our state, enriching the cultural landscape of Hawai'i. The *Masterworks Series* is a highlight, consistently featuring renowned guest artists from around the globe. These performances offer local audiences the rare opportunity to experience top-tier classical music, performed at the highest level. As a prior guest soloist of this series, the caliber of these concerts enhances Hawaii's reputation as a destination for the arts and offers an invaluable cultural experience for our residents.

Another outstanding initiative is *Symphony in the Park*, a free performance that brings orchestral music to the public in an accessible and enjoyable outdoor setting. These concerts foster a deep sense of community, making orchestral music available to everyone, regardless of their background or financial means. The outreach of the Hawai'i Symphony Orchestra extends far beyond its main stage, engaging people from all walks of life.

The *Nā Hōkū 'Ōpio* "Young Stars" is another initiative of the HSO. It is an annual competition which provides an invaluable opportunity for our most talented keiki to perform a concerto with a professional orchestra at the Waikiki Shell.

The *Hawai'i Youth Symphony Side-by-Side* program provides an invaluable mentorship opportunity for aspiring young musicians. By performing alongside professional musicians from the HSO, these students receive hands-on training, learning directly from experienced artists. This program plays a vital role in the development of Hawaii's next generation of musicians, fostering skills that will carry them into their professional careers.

The HSO's public school outreach programs are another key component of their educational mission. Symphony musicians work in small groups with individual students, providing personalized instruction that helps cultivate their musical talents. This one-on-one attention and the ability to interact with professional musicians is invaluable to our keiki, inspiring them to continue their musical studies and helping them develop their skills to their fullest potential.

The support of Resident Artistic Director Maestro Dane Lam is crucial to the success of the orchestra. His leadership has taken the HSO to new heights, inspiring both the musicians and the community with his vision, artistry, and commitment to musical excellence. Maestro Lam's leadership ensures that the HSO continues to showcase Hawaii's musical talent and provide a platform for the voices of local artists.

Equally important is the Hawai'i Symphony Orchestra's commitment to resident musicians, as well as the dedicated staff and administration that support the orchestra's diverse programs. The HSO provides professional opportunities for local musicians, giving them a platform to perform at the highest level while helping to cultivate a thriving music community in Hawai'i.

The Hawai'i Symphony Orchestra's outreach extends to the neighbor islands, with performances, educational programs, and free live streaming of concerts. This outreach ensures that the incredible music of the HSO is accessible to **all** of Hawaii's residents, not just O'ahu, regardless of geographic location. The orchestra's collaboration with local organizations such as the **Hawai'i Opera Theatre** and **Ballet Hawai'i** further strengthens Hawaii's cultural scene and brings even more high-quality performances to our state.

Most recently, the HSO has partnered with yet another local organization, the **O'ahu Choral Society** (OCS) in a performance of Beethoven's *Symphony No. 9*. This monumental piece, known for its powerful choral finale and stirring themes of unity and brotherhood, is an extraordinary example of the transformative power of music. The synergy between the HSO and OCS created an unforgettable performance that resonated deeply with a full capacity audience.

The HSO has long been a cultural cornerstone in our community, consistently delivering world-class performances that elevate the arts in Hawai'i. Their ability to bring together exceptional musicians, collaborate with renowned ensembles like OCS, and bring life to the masterpieces of the classical repertoire is nothing short of remarkable. Beethoven's *Symphony No. 9*, with its grandeur and complexity, presents a unique challenge that requires technical brilliance, artistic depth, and an unwavering commitment to excellence — qualities that the HSO embodies.

Moreover, the HSO's collaborations with legendary local artists such as Jake Shimabukuro and Robert Cazimero enrich the musical experience of our community, blending diverse musical traditions and providing opportunities for local international stars to shine on the same stage.

From an academic perspective, the Hawai'i Symphony Orchestra plays a significant role in supporting the students in the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa's Music Department. The orchestra frequently performs compositions by my colleagues in the department, offering the opportunity to hear their works performed by world-class musicians. UHM also hosts guest masterclasses and seminars led by visiting performers and composers, providing invaluable experience to our students as they prepare for professional careers in music. These experiences are crucial in shaping the next generation of musicians, composers, and music educators in Hawai'i.

In conclusion, I strongly support SB441, as it will provide vital resources to the Hawai'i Symphony Orchestra and ensure that it can continue to serve as an educational and cultural cornerstone for our community. The orchestra's work with local musicians, students, and schools, as well as its outreach to the neighbor islands and partnerships with other arts organizations, is essential to the continued growth of the arts in Hawai'i. Supporting SB441 is an investment in the future of Hawai'i's music community and will benefit not only our students but the broader public as well – from keiki to kupuna.

Thank you for your consideration of this important bill. I am confident that SB441 will have a lasting positive impact on Hawaii's culture and the arts, and I politely encourage your strong consideration of SB441 and your support.

With deep respect and aloha,

Thomas Yee, DMA

Professor of Music (piano)

SB-441-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/26/2025 10:35:42 AM

Testimony for FIN on 3/27/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Alice Li Hagan	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I have lived on Oahu since 2007 and have enjoyed and supported the Symphony events. The musicians and their performances are exceptional. Above all, I find their collaboration with young musicians inspiring such as the Beethoven celebration concert two weeks ago. With the cutbacks on music programs and their low priority in public education, I believe that it is critical that the State continues to support the Symphony and their programs on the neighbor islands.

Thank you for the opportunity to express my appreciation.

Alice

SB-441-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/26/2025 10:50:33 AM

Testimony for FIN on 3/27/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jean Toyama	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly support this bill to make official that the Hawai'i Symphony Orchestra is Hawaii's orchestra. The efforts made by the symphony to imbue love of music in our citizens is vital to the help of our people,

SB-441-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/26/2025 10:54:55 AM

Testimony for FIN on 3/27/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Beryl Yang	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I cannot think of a great world state that does not have a fantastic art museum, a thriving university, and a great symphony orchestra!

Music is for the soul. We must do all we can to support Hawai'i Symphony Orchestra!

The Hawaii Symphony is an important cultural institution that should be shared with the entire state of Hawaii. Supporting HSO provides an opportunity to enrich the lives of everyone in Hawaii. The orchestra is made up of eighty exceptional musicians and is lead by a dynamic conductor and music director, Dan Lam. The orchestra is also most fortunate to have the talents and skills of its superb resident composer, Michael Thomas Foumai.

I discovered HSO four years ago when I moved to Honolulu. I was astonished to find out how exceptional this orchestra is. The fact that so many talented professional musicians are present here on Oahu in the middle of the Pacific Ocean is amazing. They play a wide variety of styles including classical, Hawaiian, movie scores, and jazz. The versatility is incredible.

HSO has certainly enhanced my life. The pre-concert talks are very informative where both the guest artist(s) and the conductor discuss the program providing background, history, and anecdotes about what we are about to see. My knowledge of classical music, as well as the music of Hawaii and the Pacific Rim has been expanded through HSO concerts. My first exposure to the Australian didgeridoo occurred at an HSO concert. My introduction to the Easter Island pianist, Mahani Teave, took place at an HSO concert. I've enjoyed concerts featuring local artists such as Jake Shimabukuro, Keola Beamer and the Oahu Choral Society. And, the orchestra also presents Keiki concerts such as Peter and the Wolf.

HSO is truly an Oahu treasure and it needs to be expanded to our neighboring islands. I urge you to pass SB441.

Robin Ching

March 26, 2025

To: Members of the House Finance Committee

RE: Supporting SB441 SD1 HD1

Dear Representatives,

I write as a long-time patron of the Honolulu Symphony Orchestra and, in recent years, the Hawai'i Symphony Orchestra. This orchestra is comprised of fine musicians and currently an inspiring Music Director who is committed to featuring music of and about Hawai'i and the Pacific. They have performed for me and my loved ones close to 200 live performances since I began attending in the 1980s.

Research on the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra and its community has shown expenditures by the symphony have generated about four times the revenue for their local economy. I assume that a similar return is being experienced in Honolulu, and I would love to see local research being done to test that assumption.

In the meantime, designation of the Hawai'i Symphony Orchestra as the State orchestra, as described in SB441 SD1 HD1, with whatever state funding can be provided in these challenging times, is a significant step in the right direction. Besides the economic multiplier effect, the orchestra enriches the lives of students and adults statewide through live performances, recordings played on Hawai'i Public Radio, classroom presentations, and other interactions with our community.

I humbly ask for your support of SB441 SD1 HD1. Thank you very much.

Douglas G. Kreider
45-535 Luluku Rd, #A63
Kaneohe, HI 96744
dougkreider@gmail.com

SB-441-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/26/2025 11:36:08 AM

Testimony for FIN on 3/27/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Joshua Nakazawa	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support SB441 SD1 HD1. Designating the Hawaii Symphony Orchestra as the Statewide Orchestra creates a valuable opportunity to connect our communities. When we bring together different groups, it opens the door to new opportunities and partnerships that are essential for growth and innovation. This recognition enables us to weave together various historical perspectives and modern experiences through music. Orchestral performances shed light on cultural narratives, encouraging collaboration and appreciation for our common heritage.

SB-441-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/26/2025 12:02:47 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/27/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Chris Suzuki	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

The Hawai'i Symphony is an integral centerpiece in the Honolulu Community. I can't speak of how they impact concert goers who see live performances but I can speak about how they help inspire up and coming musicians to give back to the community.

The Symphony provided an outlet for me as an audience member, a composer, a performer and I was a former intern and employee where I had my experience in the non-profit sector and arts management.

Having been with the choir that performs with the Symphony regular basis, I have been fortunate to witness and observe how a simple accompaniment arrangement gets disbursed into a complex arranged ensemble of many instruments. Being present as a part of choir and orchestra collaborations helped me immensely in my creative endeavors in music.

Being a part of the Symphony's creative and diverse programming, I have been blessed to be a part of video game music (vgm) productions where the Symphony and choir perform music from video games: a passion that has co-existed in my life alongside music. After performing with their first video game music production in 2015, I founded a chamber ensemble devoted to performing live video game music after witnessing the positive effect of performing familiar and nostalgic music to audiences. Eventually, I got to be part of future Symphony vgm productions as a choir director and singer.

The result of forming this group resulted in over 20+ performances of about 100 unique video game music arrangements to 1000's of members across the Oahu community in venues where they least expect to hear live music, and musical collaborations with over a 100+ local musicians.

I would have not been able to achieve this if weren't for the inspiration given by the Hawai'i Symphony as a composer and a collaborative choral performer. I advocate for the survival of the Hawai'i Symphony orchestra as the symphony offers potential to professional and young musicians to appreciate and explore the limits of their talents and crafts and use it to better the community through performance and inspiration.

SB-441-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/26/2025 12:05:36 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/27/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jan Kamano	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Humanity is always being challenged and each time I hear the HSO I realize how music transforms us, if even for 2 hours. We all walk in and sit, different thinkers and feelers. With the downbeat we are the same and want to be uplifted...and it happens! I hope that HSO receives funding it needs to thrive so that we all can.

Chris Benjamin
827 Fort Street Mall
Honolulu, HI 98613

**HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
THE THIRTY-THIRD LEGISLATURE
REGULAR SESSION OF 2025
COMMITTEE ON FINANCE**

TESTIMONY BY CHRIS BENJAMIN – MARCH 26, 2025

Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Takenouchi and members of the Committee,

I am writing to express strong support for SB 441 SD1 HD1, a bill that designates the Hawaii Symphony Orchestra as the State of Hawaii Symphony Orchestra; requires annual reports to the Legislature; and Appropriates funds.

The Hawaii Symphony Orchestra is a cultural treasure and a vital institution that enriches the lives of residents and visitors alike. President & CEO Amy Iwano and Music & Artistic Director Dane Lam have invigorated the orchestra, audiences and the community through their innovative and diverse programming, educational outreach, and community engagement. The HSO fosters a deep appreciation for the arts and provides opportunities for people of all ages to experience the transformative power of music.

The musicians of the HSO are the music teachers of our keiki. Many, if not most, HSO musicians depend on a combination of their income from teaching and performing to live in Hawaii. SB 441 SD1 HD1 will help ensure not only the continued success and sustainability of the HSO, but the continued availability of this invaluable resource for our keiki.

I urge you to pass SB 441 SD1 HD1. The stature and funding provided by this bill will enable the orchestra to maintain its high standards of artistic excellence, expand its educational initiatives, and enable music to promote improved academic performance and better outcomes for young people.

Thank you for your consideration and for your commitment to supporting the arts in Hawaii.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Chris Benjamin", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Chris Benjamin

SB-441-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/26/2025 12:25:10 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/27/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Shera Mercer	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am very much in favor of HSO, more so than ever with the current economic climate where the arts are losing funding. I feel the arts in all forms are beneficial, from kindergarten art shows to community theatre. But being able to see/hear truly excellent art in person is not just a luxury, it elevates our experience, enriches our lives and teaches our keiki what great music sounds like. Why is that important? Its something to aspire to. It matters not if they reach those heights, but knowing where that bar is will illuminate their experiences and help them interact at a more insightful level.

HSO is also a place where we are able to expand our experiences and learn about music we've never heard before, but also hear old favorites performed like Beethoven (this past season's Beethoven symphonies were a salve on our political news wounds) And having concerts also creates community with others you experience it with - we've made a number of friends who we've met at the concerts.

After living in European cities with great orchestras I really cherish being able to attend HSO performances comparable to those orchestras. And having the HSO doesn't just make our lives better and educate our keiki, it makes us stand out - so many ignorant people I've come across think of Hawai'i as some podunk little state. I love proving them wrong ;)

SB-441-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/26/2025 12:33:35 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/27/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Erika K Aresta	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Takenouchi, and members of the House committee on Finance,

My name is Erika Aresta I'm a member of IATSE Local 665, the union representing technicians and artisans in the entertainment industry in Hawai'i. **I strongly support SB441 SD1 HD1**, relating to the Hawaii Symphony Orchestra.

The Hawai'i Symphony Orchestra is an essential piece of the tapestry of arts in Hawai'i. Founded in 1900, The symphony hosts shows and programs featuring musicians and performing artists from around the world, in addition to promoting local talent within Hawaii. Designating the Hawai'i Symphony Orchestra as the "State of Hawai'i Symphony Orchestra" will enable HSO to regularly obtain state funds to help cover its general operating costs. Our organizations have been working together for decades. We have supported them with the seasoned technical professionals necessary for their performances for many years and we are happy to support them in this initiative as well.

I strongly support SB441 SD1 HD1. Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

In Solidarity,

Erika Aresta

SB-441-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/26/2025 12:38:16 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/27/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Keahi Kuikahi	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Takenouchi, and members of the House committee on Finance,

My name is Keahi S Kuikahi. I'm a member of IATSE Local 665, the union representing technicians and artisans in the entertainment industry in Hawai'i. I strongly support SB441 SD1 HD1, relating to the Hawaii Symphony Orchestra.

The Hawai'i Symphony Orchestra is an essential piece of the tapestry of arts in Hawai'i. Founded in 1900, The symphony hosts shows and programs featuring musicians and performing artists from around the world, in addition to promoting local talent within Hawaii. Designating the Hawai'i Symphony Orchestra as the "State of Hawai'i Symphony Orchestra" will enable HSO to regularly obtain state funds to help cover its general operating costs. Our organizations have been working together for decades. We have supported them with the seasoned technical professionals necessary for their performances for many years and we are happy to support them in this initiative as well.

I strongly support SB441 SD1 HD1. Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

In Solidarity,

Keahi S Kuikahi

SB-441-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/26/2025 12:42:00 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/27/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
David Crans	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Takenouchi, and members of the House committee on Finance,

My name is David Crans. I'm a member of IATSE Local 665, the union representing technicians and artisans in the entertainment industry in Hawai'i. **I strongly support SB441 SD1 HD1**, relating to the Hawaii Symphony Orchestra.

The Hawai'i Symphony Orchestra is an essential piece of the tapestry of arts in Hawai'i. Founded in 1900, The symphony hosts shows and programs featuring musicians and performing artists from around the world, in addition to promoting local talent within Hawaii. Designating the Hawai'i Symphony Orchestra as the "State of Hawai'i Symphony Orchestra" will enable HSO to regularly obtain state funds to help cover its general operating costs. Our organizations have been working together for decades. We have supported them with the seasoned technical professionals necessary for their performances for many years and we are happy to support them in this initiative as well.

I strongly support SB441 SD1 HD1. Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

In Solidarity,

David Crans

Aloha Chair Yamahashita, Vice Chair Kitagawa, and members of the committee,

I am writing in full support of SB441 SD1. This bill would provide much needed support to the Hawai'i Symphony Orchestra, whose role in the community is invaluable.

HSO presents more than 50 diverse concerts annually, including free community concerts, free educational concerts such as the Symphony of Hawaiian Birds and Symphony of the Hawai'i Forests, and Side by Side concerts with the Hawai'i Youth Symphony and through the Na Hoku Opio - Young Stars competition. The Symphony features local artists, both established and up and coming, through the HapaSymphony series, and brings in world class classical artists such as Yo-Yo Ma and Joshua Bell for the Masterworks Series.

Hawai'i Symphony musicians are ubiquitous in the Hawai'i music community, impacting every aspect of instrumental music performance. They teach in public schools, private schools, and universities throughout the state. A great example of this is the applied music performance faculty at UH Mānoa, where over 70% of the faculty are current or former HSO members. Not only do they teach children directly, they train generation after generation of Hawai'i's music educators. Symphony Musicians can be spotted in almost every music performance context throughout the island of O'ahu, performing with organizations like Ballet Hawai'i, Hawai'i Opera Theatre, Chamber Music Hawai'i, and the Royal Hawaiian Band. You can find them performing jazz in Waikiki at the Blue Note, classical concerts throughout O'ahu and Maui, or chamber music on Molokai'i and Big Island. Whether you've been to a Hawai'i Symphony show or not, you've certainly seen an HSO musician perform.

Financially, it has been shown in study after study that the arts have an enormous impact on their local economies. A recent study commissioned by the Pittsburgh Symphony demonstrated that for every dollar the symphony spends, four dollars are generated in the local economy. Though we don't have a similar study yet for Hawai'i, we do have general arts statistics that show similar trends. You can see the economic impact of the HSO with your own eyes by walking through Chinatown before or after a concert, as patrons fan out to restaurants and bars, supporting local businesses and helping to revitalize that neighborhood.

For an organization like the Hawai'i Symphony Orchestra, the funding provided in SB441 SD1 would be monumental. It would allow the HSO to expand free public concerts statewide, expand its music education concerts, support local musicians and cultural collaborations, and commission new works to reflect Hawai'i's unique heritage. This investment will be felt in all aspects of Hawai'i's arts community for many years.

There are no great cities in the world without a great symphony orchestra, and we must work to protect the incredible orchestra we have. Many states throughout the country support their orchestras with similar funding, and its impact is enormous. In a time of budget cuts and attacks on non-profits and the arts, the State of Hawai'i has an incredible opportunity to demonstrate our shared values and codify support of one of our cultural gems, preserving the Hawai'i Symphony Orchestra's impact for generations.

Mahalo nui loa,

Brad Davis

SB-441-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/26/2025 1:14:39 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/27/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Patrick Jeppeson	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Patrick Henry Jeppeson is a member of local 665 and Sag-Aftra. I support sb441 and looming forward to your support .
any help Appreciated

Patrick Henry Jeppeson

SB-441-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/26/2025 1:16:52 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/27/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Stephen A. Tajima	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dear Members of the House Finance Committee, I am in support SB441 SD1 HD1. Having volunteered with HSO in the finance function, I am well aware of the financial challenges that the orchestra faces to fulfill its mission which includes "...enhance the cultural vitality and quality of life in these islands and to operate in a financially sound manner". HSO has indeed enhanced the vitality and quality of life in Hawaii with its HAPA concert series featuring Hawaiian music and home-grown artists and musicians bringing the symphonic experience with Hawaiian influence to our community of residents and visitors. Only in Hawaii. The successful passing of this bill will go a long way to sustain the orchestra's future. I ask for your kokua for the benefit of Hawaii. Mahalo!

TESTIMONY FOR SB441 SD1 HD1

David Masunaga (masunaga@iolani.org)

SB441 is not only going to be ground-breaking legislation in designating a Hawai'i State symphony orchestra, but also targets its funding through legislative support with exemption from Chapter 42F. The potential for outreach and service to Hawai'i is tremendous.

The following are comments on this bill which should be addressed by the Finance Committee of the House at this time:

- 1) To clarify in the opening statement in Section 1, the Hawai'i Symphony Orchestra was not founded in 1900 as the Honolulu Symphony. The Honolulu Symphony was disbanded, dissolved and liquidated in Chapter 7 bankruptcy in 2010. A group of businesspeople subsequently formed a Symphony Exploratory Committee to look into the revival of professional symphonic orchestral music on O'ahu. The orchestra formed, the Hawai'i Symphony Orchestra, can certainly be thought of and designated as the successor to the Honolulu Symphony, but beyond some musicians who are/were common to both, the two entities do not share the same history, non-profit documents, DCCA designations or governance.

(The oldest symphony orchestra in continuous existence and actively concertizing is the Oahu Civic Orchestra, which in the fall will celebrate its 53rd year.)

- 2) The designation of a statewide organization implies that the Hawai'i Symphony's reach will go beyond O'ahu. On the Hawaii Theatre stage and in a recent Hawai'i Public radio interview HSO President and CEO Amy Iwano said the measure (SB441) would help the orchestra expand free public concerts statewide, enhance music education for thousands of children in the state, support local musicians and cultural collaboration, and commission new works that reflect Hawai'i's unique heritage.

"Right now, many communities — especially on the Neighbor Islands and in underserved areas — have little to no access to live symphonic music," Iwano said in written testimony. "Music education opportunities are unevenly distributed,

despite clear evidence linking exposure to the arts with improved academic and social outcomes.”

Unfortunately, her statements do not take into account the herculean efforts of other symphonic orchestra organizations in our state. For over two decades the Maui Pops and the Kamuela Philharmonic have been working hard to fill in the gaps left by the Honolulu Symphony in the past decades by providing concerts and music educational programs to their audiences through donations as well as local, state and national grants. In fact, local engagement in the symphonic arts dates from the era of their predecessors, the Maui Symphony and the Kona Symphony.

Neighbor Island audiences are generous and supportive but are not large – as yet there have been no conversations with the Hawai‘i Symphony about how their new legislative designation and funding will impact the programs and audiences which these orchestras have spent years to build. There is understandable concern here.

- 3) While it is clear that Section 3 allows the State of Hawaii Symphony Orchestra to use appropriated funds for general operating costs, the deposit of this appropriation into the State of Hawaii Endowment Fund (Section 4) disallows this use according to Act 175 (Session Laws of Hawaii 1995). Somehow this dissonance (if there is indeed one) should be clarified. FYI from Act 175:

The State of Hawaii endowment fund shall be subject to the restrictions that: (1) No part of the principal amount contributed to the fund by the State or by matching grants shall be used for operations of the Honolulu symphony; (2) Income and capital gains from the fund shall not be distributed for use in the operations of the Honolulu symphony during any period that the value of the fund shall be less than the principal amounts contributed to the fund; and (3) The amounts contributed to the fund by the State shall revert to the State to the extent that matching or other conditions to the grant of the funds are not met, and the fund also shall be subject to additional restrictions as may be imposed with respect to transfers of funds in future legislation appropriating sums to be contributed to the fund.

I hope that the hearing of the House Finance Committee on Thursday, March 27, 2025 can clear up some finer points regarding this monumental piece of arts legislation for our state.

With aloha,

David Masunaga

masunaga@iolani.org

SB-441-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/26/2025 1:24:31 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/27/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Albert Mackey	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Being born and raised in Honolulu, I consider myself incredibly fortunate to have grown up in a state with such a unique and vibrant arts culture, deeply embraced by its people. Naturally, the Hawaii Symphony Orchestra is an important part of that culture, and for me, to finally be a part of this organization is something I've strived for since I was little.

A unique and vibrant arts scene is one that benefits its creators and recipients, making accessibility an important factor for both sides to experience growth and flourish. With the extra funding provided by SB441, our HSO will have greater outreach potential, giving more exposure to our impressionable keiki across our state to see and hear what I saw when I was their age: great music made by great (and 'plenty' local) musicians.

Hello!

My name is Cayne Hiraoka and I am a first year student at the University of Hawaii at Manoa majoring in music education. I am writing to you because I think it would be wonderful for the Hawaii Symphony Orchestra (HSO) to receive funding support from the State of Hawaii. I was one of the winners of Na Hoku Opio Young Stars Concerto Competition in 2024 and it is an annual competition that the HSO holds for seniors in high school to compete for the opportunity to play solo repertoire with a professional orchestra. I am so grateful to have received this opportunity from the HSO. This moment in my musical career genuinely changed my life. Having the opportunity to perform solo for hundreds of people at their annual park concert was an exhilarating experience! During the rehearsal, I felt as if I learned so much by just observing them and during the performance I got an adrenaline rush that I have never experienced in my life prior to this.

The HSO also puts on concerts that are very easily digestible for the general audience that isn't too familiar with classical music. This year, they are performing music from *Star Wars* alongside the original film. They have also done this with films like *Jurassic Park* and *Harry Potter*. They have also put on pop concerts with themes such as music from Disney, Studio Ghibli, and music from video games. These opportunities allow people to experience live music with music that they enjoy and it also helps them step into the doorways of classical music.

In conclusion, the HSO provides young musicians a once in a lifetime opportunity to solo with a professional orchestra and also brings classical music to a much broader audience. I have once benefitted from their programs and I can ensure that they have had a very lasting impact on my development as a musician. With this funding, the HSO can continue to give young musicians this wonderful opportunity and also provide live music for the current and future generations. With testimony, I hope you consider the joy that the HSO brings to Hawaii and that you provide them the support for their success.

Best,

Cayne Hiraoka



March 26, 2025

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SB441 SD1 HD1

Aloha Esteemed Members of the House Finance Committee,

My name is Katie Pickman, and I am honored to serve as a board member of the Hawai'i Symphony Orchestra (HSO) since 2020. I submit this testimony in strong support of SB 441, which designates the Hawai'i Symphony Orchestra as the State of Hawai'i Symphony Orchestra.

For years, I have witnessed firsthand the tireless efforts of the HSO team and board to ensure the financial health and sustainability of this extraordinary institution. The dedication, passion, and resilience that fuel this organization are unmatched—it is truly a labor of love.

The Hawai'i Symphony Orchestra is more than an ensemble of world-class musicians; it is a cultural treasure that enriches our community in ways that cannot be measured in numbers alone. It moves people. It connects us. It speaks where words cannot.

In February, I attended a Beyond the Music event showcasing Beethoven's symphonies. Sitting nearby was a mother and her son, who had limited communication abilities. Yet, the moment the symphony began playing, his body instinctively moved in sync with the music, his arms soaring with joy. His mother watched with a smile that radiated pure happiness—her son had found his space of connection through music. This moment is just one of countless examples of how the HSO transforms lives, reaches across barriers, and provides an essential artistic heartbeat for our islands.

While the HSO continues to deliver exceptional performances and impactful educational opportunities, its financial sustainability remains a pressing concern. Designating HSO as the State of Hawai'i Symphony Orchestra would provide essential recognition and support to ensure that future generations can continue to experience the power of live symphonic music.

I urge the committee to pass SB 441 and stand in support of an institution that brings immeasurable value to our community. Mahalo for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Katie Pickman

Board Member, Hawai'i Symphony Orchestra

General Manager, Hawaii News Now

SB-441-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/26/2025 1:40:42 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/27/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Lori Watkins	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I fully support SB441 and urge the committee to move forward and pass this legislation. State sponsorship of the Hawai'i Symphony Orchestra is an investment in the value of hard work, teamwork, and unity within our community at a time when divisiveness is perceived across the country. One only had to attend a performance during the HSO's Beethoven Festival to witness the high level of professionalism and musicianship the orchestra represents. Collaborations with the Oahu Choral Society and Hawai'i Youth Symphony cast a net for a wider community audience and showcased how different groups in our community can come together and create a masterful, musical experience. Both of my teenage sons were inspired by these performances to pursue their own musical interests which, as a parent, I find invaluable. Our keiki need to see these representations of hard work and teamwork within their community to help them grow as future leaders, and it is vital that there are a variety of sources to provide such examples, not only team sports.

Mahalo for your attention,

Lori Watkins

SB-441-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/26/2025 1:56:55 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/27/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Emi Horii	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am writing in strong support of SB441, which would designate the Hawaii Symphony Orchestra (HSO) as the "State of Hawaii Symphony Orchestra."

As a former violinist with the Hawaii Youth Symphony (HYS), I experienced firsthand the profound impact that HSO has on our community's musical landscape. HSO often conducts side-by-side concerts with HYS where young musicians perform alongside professionals, creating inspiring experiences that genuinely impact each new generation of musicians.

Beyond performances, HSO musicians also form the backbone of music education throughout the state. Most music students in Hawaii, including myself, receive music education from teachers who are HSO musicians. These educators actively nurture the next generation of musicians through private lessons, school programs (i.e. chamber music and orchestra), and community initiatives. By supporting this bill and recognizing HSO's official designation, we support not only the orchestra but also the extensive educational network it sustains. This recognition helps expand HSO's reach and resources, benefiting Hawaii's musical landscape and ensuring it will continue to thrive for generations to come.

SB-441-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/26/2025 1:58:27 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/27/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Tommy Morrison	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I write this testimony in strong support of SB441.

The Hawaii Symphony Orchestra is vital asset to all people in the state of Hawaii. The Orchestra is truly a vessel of great cultural, artistic, and educational importance in the current landscape of our society.

Our programming is reflective of our place in the world, and the HSO's emphasis on supporting local artists through programs like our HAPA series and the Na Hoku Opio Young Artist Competition are vital parts of our mission to promote and feature instrumental music in Hawaii by local artists.

Artistically, the HSO provides top class performances for our public. We feature programming which is accessible to all ages, and provide a very specific and unique experience to our concertgoers. There is so much value in the live concert experience, and the HSO helps bring our community together, whether it be at the Hawaii Theatre, the Waikiki Shell, Kailua District Park, Neil Blaisdell Concert Hall, or elsewhere throughout the state.

Most importantly, the HSO is a great supporter of musical education in Hawaii. There are countless studies showing the positive effects of learning an instrument on brain development, which applies to all ages from keiki to kupuna. The HSO's musicians fill a vital role in our community as teachers, using our decades of study and expertise to aid the next generations of well rounded people in Hawaii.

The funding from SB441's passage would be an incredible boost to our organization, and our mission to make music for the entire state of Hawaii. There is no better investment than in our people and our cultural experience than to provide live music for all.

Tommy Morrison

Acting Principal Bassoon

Hawaii Symphony Orchestra

SB-441-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/26/2025 1:58:40 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/27/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Asia Doike	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Testimony in Support of SB441 – Hawaii Symphony Orchestra

Aloha Chair, Vice Chair, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Asia Doike, and I am writing in strong support of SB441, which provides vital funding and support for the Hawaii Symphony Orchestra (HSO).

I grew up in Hawaii, and the HSO has had a profound impact on my life and development, both as a person and as a musician. Supporting the Hawaii Symphony Orchestra means supporting future generations of Hawaii’s youth. It means sustaining an institution that brings world-class music to our islands, enriches our cultural landscape, and actively nurtures the next generation through education and outreach. The HSO is not just a performing arts organization; it is a cultural and educational cornerstone of our community.

I respectfully urge you to pass SB441 and continue to invest in the Hawaii Symphony Orchestra. The impact of your support extends far beyond the concert hall—it touches lives, inspires dreams, and builds a stronger, more vibrant Hawaii for us all.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,
Asia Doike