

Resolution

No. _____

URGING THE OFFICE OF ECONOMIC
DEVELOPMENT TO REQUIRE THE MAUI
COUNTY VISITOR ASSOCIATION TO
INCORPORATE SPECIFIC ENVIRONMENTAL
ACTION ITEMS INTO GRANT OBJECTIVES

WHEREAS, tourism is a successful and vital part of the economy of Maui County that we must support and manage in balance with the long-term health of our resources and quality of life for residents; and

WHEREAS, Maui island visitor arrivals are on pace to reach nearly 2.9 million visitors by year's end, a milestone that would make 2018 the fourth straight record-breaking year for travelers to the Valley Isle, according to the Hawaii Tourism Authority; and

WHEREAS, growth in the number of visitors to the island is projected to continue in the next few years and the Maui County Tourism Industry Strategic Plan 2017-2026 includes plans to "increase structural capacity to accommodate more visitors," which will also increase visitor impacts on our environment, open spaces, and natural resources; and

WHEREAS, recent reports published by University of Hawaii Economic Research Organization (UHERO) and The World Travel and Tourism Council focus on the need for tourism-based economies to "shift focus from promotion to broader planning and management challenges" in order to ensure long term economic and environmental sustainability; and

WHEREAS, funds should be prioritized to manage visitor population growth, including advocating to keep airline arrival numbers within recommended growth guidelines as identified by policy 4.2.3.a of the Maui Island Plan which states "promote a desirable island population by striving not to exceed an island-wide visitor population of roughly 33 percent of the resident population"; and

WHEREAS, targeted campaigns should educate visitors on various topics, including how to identify companies that follow sustainable practices, how to minimize waste, the importance of buying local and supporting the local economy, and reef-safe sunscreen, all of which would support the sustainability of Maui's environment; and

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From Committee Chair

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WHEREAS, a publicly accessible database should provide volunteer workday opportunities for visitors, to offer valuable learning experiences, improve Maui, and support our local organizations that need people power; and

WHEREAS, a visitor pledge should be created and distributed with existing Department of Agriculture forms on inbound flights, that include safety and environmental information, a directory of volunteer opportunities for visitors, and a section to be signed and returned, pledging to enjoy Maui while being mindful of our sensitive environment and culture; and

WHEREAS, tour operators, concierge, permit holders, and island activity staff should be educated on sustainable tourism practices and the history and culture of our islands, and companies that complete these trainings should be supported by both funding and marketing campaigns; and

WHEREAS, a Sustainable Tourism Board should be established to ensure County and State level policy and outreach efforts align with environmental protection, preservation, and enhancement; and

WHEREAS, the Maui County Visitor Association was appropriated \$4 million in the Fiscal Year 2019 Budget, administered by the Office of the Mayor, Office of Economic Development; and

WHEREAS, the Office of Economic Development oversees the use of grant funds, including goals, objectives, action steps, and performance measures; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to section 3.36.120, Maui County Code, the Office of Economic Development is required to submit to Council an evaluation of every grant, including a summary of whether each grant attained the intended results in the manner contemplated, within eight weeks after the end of the fiscal year; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED by the Council of the County of Maui:

1. That it hereby urges the Office of Economic Development to require the Maui County Visitor Association to incorporate

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specific environmental action items, including those suggested in this resolution, into grant objectives; and

2. That it hereby urges the Office of Economic Development to submit to Council a detailed grant evaluation on the grant monies appropriated to the Maui County Visitor Association within eight weeks after the end of each fiscal year, as required by the Maui County Code; and
3. That certified copies of this resolution be transmitted to the Mayor; the Director of the Office of Economic Development; Sherry Duong, Executive Director, Maui Visitors Bureau; John Monahan, President and CEO, Hawaii Visitors and Convention Bureau; and George D. Szigeti, President and CEO, Hawaii Tourism Authority.

APPROVED AS TO FORM AND LEGALITY

Deputy Corporation Counsel
County of Maui

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