



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

December 1, 2022

**STATEMENT REGARDING HTA'S MARKETING AND DESTINATION MANAGEMENT CONTRACT**

**Attributable to Kūhiō Lewis, CNHA Chief Executive Officer**

"The Council for Native Hawaiian Advancement (CNHA) is encouraged by Governor-elect Josh Green's recent media comments expressing his preference to broker an expeditious resolution to the dispute surrounding our winning bid of the State's primary tourism marketing and destination management contract.

"We agree with Governor-Elect Green that the State cannot afford to continue to waste time and resources delaying the execution of this contract, which serves as a critical tool to bringing U.S. tourists to Hawai'i and to minimizing the impacts of visitors to the islands. CNHA was awarded the job because our proposal best demonstrated that tourism can be managed in a way that uplifts local businesses, protects our natural environment, and heralds our rich culture.

"CNHA was disappointed with the Department of Business and Economic Development and Tourism Director's proposal this past Monday to rescind CNHA's award; renege on the brokered resolution; and cancel the underlying solicitation. This misguided proposal would require the State to re-start this entire procurement process from scratch for the third time in just over a year. This would do all Hawai'i a major disservice.

"Moreover, the proposed decision is unlawful. Hawai'i law requires fair and equitable treatment for all bidders of public works and provides for a procurement process designed to ensure those core values are upheld. CNHA participated in good faith in that process and won the award following Hawai'i Tourism Authority's comprehensive review of the bidders.

"The law requires that CNHA, as the awardee, receive the contract. Hawai'i law does not support the rescission of an award without a finding that the award was in violation of the law. CNHA intends to ensure that the law is followed and is prepared to respond decisively to any legally unwarranted efforts to undo the award to CNHA.

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"Nevertheless, CNHA remains committed to helping to transform Hawai'i's main economic driver. We look forward to working closely with the new Administration after Monday's inauguration to expeditiously resolve this dispute."

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