

Monthly Newsletter



MPI ALOHA CHAPTER
02 June 2025



SB1571 - HTA

By Aaron Rego, VP of Communications - MPI Aloha Chapter

There has been a lot happening in the news lately regarding Hawai'i tourism... more specifically, Hawai'i Tourism Authority.

At the close of May, it was moved into motion to strip the Hawai'i Tourism Authority (HTA) board of oversight over tourism policy and management for the state.

Governor Josh Green, who has been a stark proponent, signed [SB1571](#) into motion, though it still remains uncertain how the new structure will commence to operate.

Green, who recently sat down for an interview on [Hawai'i News Now Sunrise](#), said, "I'm going to put in some advisors that are going to be a lot more thoughtful about how we proceed."

[Act 132](#) of SB1571 will create a peculiar management structure. While the HTA board is labeled "advisory," it still has the power to hire and fire its CEO, who would also need Senate confirmation and would "report" to the governor.

In layman's terms, this will

effectively end HTA's governance as an independent agency moving forward.

There have been growing frustrations amongst lawmakers who seek to shift the focus of HTA from marketing for more visitors to a sounder visitor impact management initiative.

Overall, lawmakers believe the change will end conflict at HTA and bring better coordination with the government agencies that actually manage tourist impacts and make tourism work better for residents and the environment.

It is worth noting that not all are in favor of such change. All of us in the visitor industry will be watching closely as this story continues to materialize.

You can learn more about SB1571 by reading this [Pacific Business News](#) article.

In this newsletter you can expect:

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SB1396 - HAWAII TRANSIENT ACCOMMODATIONS TAX

Traveling to Hawai'i will cost visitors just a little more starting January 1st, 2026. In late May, The Hawai'i Legislature had passed SB1396. The measure, in which is intended to mitigate the effects of climate change, will increase the existing transient accommodations tax (TAT) from 10.25% to 11%. In addition, each individual county (Kaua'i, O'ahu, Maui, and Hawai'i) has the ability to increase their individual TAT up to 3%. When was the last time you itemized your hotel folio?

The bill has been sent to Governor Josh Green, in which who is in favor, to sign into action by July 9th, 2025. "This legislation, which I intend to sign, is the first of its kind in the nation and represents a generational commitment to protect our aina [land]. Hawaii is truly setting a new standard to address the climate crisis, and I want to thank lawmakers for their unrelenting work these past two years in bringing this to fruition," [the governor said in a news release](#).

Additionally, those whom travel to Hawai'i on cruise ships, will also be subject to the TAT. This has been enacted following a law that encompasses those staying outside of hotels.

As with any tax hike, SB1396 has garnered both support and opposition. Additional perspective will surely come to light with time.



KAMEHAMEHA DAY

Each June, Hawai'i pays homage to the fearless leader who unified the Hawaiian Islands. The first observance of Kamehameha Day took place on June 11, 1872. Lot Kapuāiwa (Kamehameha V) instituted the holiday, which is meant to be a day to honor his grandfather, Kamehameha I.

Early celebrations of Kamehameha Day featured carnivals, fairs, and lots of racing – foot races, horse races and even velocipede races (consisting of one, two, three, four, and even five wheel pedaled vehicles). The Hawaiian Language newspaper "Ka Lāhui Hawai'i," dated June 14, 1877, reported that more than 4,000 people gathered at the horse race track where Kapi'olani Park now sits. King Kalākaua and his consort

Kapi'olani were in attendance and there was even a gunshot salute to remember the warrior king.

Kamehameha Day was one of the first holidays adopted by Hawai'i when it achieved statehood in 1959.

In more recent years, Kamehameha Day has evolved into a celebration of elaborate events. The festivities include a Sunday service at Kawaiaha'o Church, lei draping ceremonies on Kamehameha statues, floral parades and more. Although the way the event is celebrated has changed, the honor remains the same. On June 11, Hawai'i once again lifts up Kamehameha I in great reverence for his tireless work as a noble leader, just as Lot intended so many years ago.

Here are a list of events in which are happening across the islands this month:

- [Hawai'i Island](#) - June 7th, 2025
 - Kapa'au Statue Lei Draping: A lei draping ceremony at the statue of King Kamehameha in Kapa'au.
 - Hawi-Kapa'au and Hilo Floral Parades: Floral parades between the towns of Hawi and Kapa'au, and in Hilo.

KAMEHAMEHA DAY

- Kailua-Kona Ho'olaule'a: A celebration with a parade and ho'olaule'a on Ali'i Drive in Kailua-Kona.
- **Maui** - June 21st, 2025
 - Nā King Kamehameha Commemorative Pā'ū Parade
 - Nā King Kamehameha Commemorative Ho'olaule'a
- **Kaua'i** - June 14th, 2025
 - King Kamehameha Celebration Floral Parade (Līhu'e)
 - King Kamehameha Celebration Ho'olaule'a (Līhu'e), Historic County Building Lawn
- **Moloka'i** - June 13th, 14th, & 28th, 2025
 - King's Gala, June 13, 2025, at Hiro's 'Ohana Grill, Hotel Moloka'i (Kaunakakai).
 - Ho'olaule'a, June 14, 2025, at Moloka'i Community Health Center (Kaunakakai).
 - Moloka'i Paniolo Heritage Festival, June 28, 2025, Molokai'i Ranch (Maunaloa).

O'ahu - June 11th, 13th, & 14th, 2025

- King Kamehameha I tribute at the statue of Kamehameha I, Ali'iōlani Hale, (Honolulu).
- King Kamehameha Statue Lei Draping (Honolulu), Ali'iōlani Hale.
- 108th King Kamehameha Celebration Floral Parade (Honolulu), 'Iolani Palace to Kapi'olani Park.
- King Kamehameha Celebration Ho'olaule'a (Honolulu), Queen Kapi'olani Park.

For more information about how celebrate Kamehameha Day, please [CLICK HERE](#).



PAWS FOR PORTRAITS

Slots are still available for Paws for Portraits!

Have you been dreaming about getting professional high quality photos of your pet? Our pets are more than just our furry and feathered companions, they are a part of the 'Ohana!

Like many of us, you probably have a camera roll full of photos of your pets. Whether it be lounging at home on the couch, walking your favorite beach, or hiking that epic trail.

What better time than now to capture these special moments?

Each pet has their own personalities, and we have found that these personalities make for the most perfect wall art!

Nothing brightens up a day like walking into your home or office and seeing that funny, sassy, or even stoic photo of your pet hanging on the wall.

In partnership with our MPI Aloha Chapter President Elect, Keith Uehara, Owner and Operator of [Keith Uehara Photography](#) and [Barefoot Adventures](#).

the MPI Board of Directors invites you, your family, and friends to participate in **"Paws for Portraits"**.



How it works:

[CLICK HERE TO PURCHASE](#)

Your "Paws for Portraits" session is valid from May 2025 through June 2026.

Location:

881 4th Street
Pearl City, O'ahu, HI 96782

Cost: \$195 per Session

What's Included:

- 30 Minute Studio Session
- 20 High Resolution Files for One (1) Furry Friend
- Images Available Online for Viewing, Sharing, and Downloading
- Copy Right Release

NEW MPI MEMBER SPOTLIGHTS



MELISSA LAT

SPOTLIGHT PHOTOBOOTH

Melissa Lat is the creative force behind [Spotlight Photobooth Company](#). Her company offers a unique and engaging photo and video experience that elevates any event. Specializing in destination weddings, special events, and incentive corporate events across the islands of Hawaii. Her precision to detail is highlighted in every project as she elevates the standards of the industry.



ALVIN PRASAD

IHG HOTELS & RESORTS

Alvin Prasad is the Portfolio Director of Human Resources for [IHG Hotels & Resorts](#). In his position, he oversees IHG's people, culture and talent acquisition agenda of our FNNP owned IHG Hotels & Resorts in Fiji. He is a believer and champion of Diversity Equity & Inclusion (DE&I) and pride ourselves in creating a diverse culture where everyone can thrive.



NEW MEMBER?

- Free or discounted access to MPI Academy educational resources, webinars, workshops, and certifications to advance your career.
- Discounted member rates for MPI Signature Events and Chapter/Club events, giving you the best opportunities to connect with peers at the local and international levels.
- Access to MPI Communities, your online home for collaboration and problem-solving with fellow industry professionals.
- Leadership opportunities and a global network of partners to help you grow.
- Local and global networking

SAVE THE DATE: MPI GALA



The MPI Aloha Chapter Board cordially invites your to save the date for the 2025 MPI Gala Awards & Fundraiser!

Join MPI Aloha Chapter for a night of fun at the Prince Waikiki as it will be a night to remember!

The event will also honor industry leaders who have left a lasting impact on our community at large.

When: **Saturday, September 6th, 2025**

Where: Prince Waikiki

Address: 100 Holomoana Street, Honolulu, HI 96815

More details on this event to come!



HSMAI HAWAII 15th ANNUAL GOLF TOURNAMENT

The Hospitality Sales and Marketing Association International (HSMAI) Hawaii Chapter invites you to join them at the 15th Annual HSMAI Hawaii Golf Tournament at the private Hoakalei Country Club! This premier event offers a day of exceptional golf, networking with fellow hospitality professionals, and fun in the sun, all while supporting our local community. Whether you're swinging for a cause or aiming to connect with industry leaders, this tournament promises competitive play on one of Hawaii's top courses. Register now or sponsor a hole to showcase your business to Hawaii's hospitality community.

Don't miss out—secure your spot today for a day on the greens you won't forget!

To register, please [CLICK HERE](#).

Final registration ends on July 2nd, 2025. Make sure to register well in advance as team slots fill up quickly.

Tournament Format: 4-Person Team Play, Play Best Drive only (2 Drives min. per player), 2-Putt Maximum.



LILO & STICH

Lilo & Stich, based off of Disney's 2002 animated feature film debuted in theaters across the world - and it was a true Hawaiian Rollercoaster Rider!

The live action version, which was released in late May, follows the same story plot in which the original was based off.

Lilo, whose quirky personality makes her a social outcast, and whose inability to make friends causes her to lash out. That is, until she meets Stich, an alien who escapes exile from the Intergalactic Federation by crash-landing on Earth. Lilo teaches Stich about the meaning of 'ohana (family). The film has dominated box office charts and is the second highest grossing film of 2025 thus far! 'Ohana means family, and family means, no one gets left behind.



HILTON HAWAIIAN VILLAGE RENOVATION 2025

The Hilton Hawaiian Village Waikiki Beach Resort, Hawaii's largest resort, is on track to becoming even larger!

The resort, which just completed one of an 83 million dollar renovation, starting with the Rainbow Tower, is not done yet. When all is said and done, the resort will increase room inventory to 822 rooms by next year.

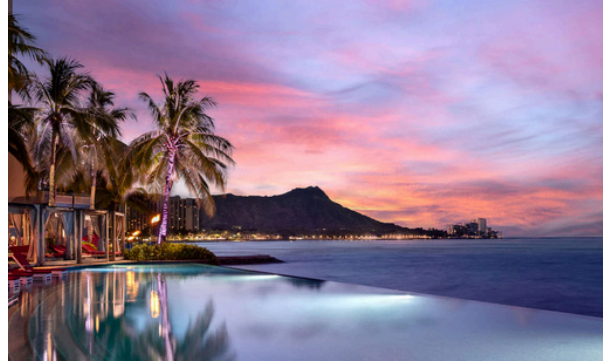
Additionally, the second phase of the renovation will include the Palace Tower. This renovation is slated for Q3 of 2025.

Currently, the resort features 2,860 rooms with 150,000 square feet of meeting space. The resort was first constructed in the 1950s and continues to be an iconic Hawaii escape.



CAREER OPPORTUNITIES

[Kona Village, A Rosewood Resort](#) is seeking to hire a Director of Event Operations. This position is responsible for the management of all aspects of the Banquet Department functions, in accordance with hotel standards. Directs, implements, and maintains a service and management philosophy which serves as a guide to respective staff. Less than 10 miles north of the Kona International Airport, Kona Village, A Rosewood Resort features 150 unique, standalone guest hailes with locally-inspired décor and a privileged sense of seclusion. To apply, [CLICK HERE](#).



AQUA ASTON CIRCLE HOTEL (MARRIOTT)

The [Aqua Aston Waikiki Circle Hotel](#) has a posting for a General Manager position. This position oversees all operations that support the Waikiki Circle Hotel. This is inclusive of but not limited to the Front Desk operations, housekeeping, maintenance, and owner relations. The General Manager also works with the tenant in the lobby and conveys Ownership's requests and helps with overall cleanliness. The General Manager is responsible for maximizing the return on investment to ownership, as well as achieving the financial goals of AAH. To apply for this incredible opportunity, please [CLICK HERE](#).

WALDORF ASTORIA GRAND WAILEA



The [Waldorf Astoria Grand Wailea](#) on Maui is looking for a Director of National Sales. The Director of National Sales at Waldorf Astoria Grand Wailea plays a key role in driving group business by serving as the primary liaison between the hotel and prospective clients. This individual is responsible for generating new sales opportunities, managing client relationships, and ensuring a seamless transition from sales to event execution. This role will be responsible for group sales within the Southeast, Southwest, and Canada markets. Hilton is the leading global hospitality company, spanning the lodging sector from luxurious full-service hotels and resorts to extended-stay suites and mid-priced hotels. For nearly a century, Hilton has offered business and leisure travelers the finest in accommodations, service, amenities and value. To apply, please [CLICK HERE](#).



HYATT REGENCY MAUI RESORT AND SPA

The [Hyatt Regency Maui Resort & Spa](#) is hiring a Director of Sales & Marketing. The Director of Sales has direct oversight of the Sales and Marketing operation of the hotel. The DOS has responsibility of the Sales and Marketing Budget/P&L, revenue forecasting, advertising, marketing, developing and writing business plans, and ownership meetings. The DOS is responsible for the supervision of sales managers, trainees, interns, and administrative staff. Additional responsibilities include the recruitment and hiring of sales staff, training, managing and coaching sales managers in their selling process in order to meet company goals and maximize hotel revenues. he DOS reports directly to the General Manager and Regional Vice President of Sales responsible for the hotel. Communication and organizational skills are of the utmost importance. [CLICK HERE](#) to apply.



SITE CLASSIC 2025

SITE Classic 2025 brings together over 270 senior incentive travel professionals — including 85 hosted buyers and 170 global suppliers — for three immersive days of purpose-driven connection, peer-led learning, and cultural discovery in one of the world's most motivational destinations.

This is more than an event. It's a journey guided by Hawaiian values and the strategic pillars of SITE: Connect, Learn, Discover, and Shape.

For more information, [CLICK HERE](#).

Why Attend SITE Classic?

Connect: Forge authentic relationships with global leaders in incentive travel. From curated networking to purpose-driven conversations, SITE Classic is where lasting partnerships begin.

Learn: Be among the first to preview insights from the 2025 Incentive Travel Index and participate in peer-led workshops. Co-create the SITE Classic white paper — an actionable playbook shaping the industry's future.

Discover: Step beyond the beach and into the soul of Maui. Through immersive excursions, cultural storytelling, and community connection, you'll experience Hawai'i with purpose and respect.

Shape: Join meaningful dialogue on the evolving role of incentive travel — from sustainability and inclusivity to leadership and legacy. Your voice matters in shaping what comes next.

Highlights of SITE Classic 2025

- Hosted at the iconic Ritz-Carlton Maui, Kapalua — a luxury retreat rooted in natural beauty and Hawaiian culture
- High-impact educational sessions and facilitated roundtables
- Exclusive networking receptions and cultural experiences
- Co-creation of a white paper on the purpose and direction of incentive travel
- Live and silent auctions benefiting SITE Foundation — featuring once-in-a-lifetime travel packages
- Small group activities focused on culture, community, and sustainability

mahalo for reading!



ALOHA
CHAPTER



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