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TESTIMONY OF
SARAH M. RICHARDS, PRESIDENT
HAWAII THEATRE CENTER

TO: The Honorable Nestor R. Garcia, Chair, Budget Committee
The Honorable Gary H. Okino, Vice Chair, Budget Committee
The Honorable Duke Bainum, Committee Member
The Honorable Charles K. Djou, Committee Member
The Honorable Rod Tam, Committee Member

RE: SPECIAL BUDGET COMMITTEE MEETING
MONDAY, MAY 18, 2009
9:00 AM, COMMITTEE MEETING ROOM
BILL 15, CD1 EXECUTIVE OPERATING BUDGET & PROGRAM

To the Honorable Nestor Garcia and Members of the Budget Committee:

My name is Sarah Richards and I'm president of the Hawaii Theatre Center and I'm pleased to have the opportunity to testify in support of the restitution of the budget for the Mayor's Office of Culture and the Arts in Bill 15, CD1.

As we all know, the fiscal crisis has hit all businesses and most particularly impacts non-profits that depend, as in our case, on 65% of our support from the public and private sectors to survive. The \$75,000 which the City and County has awarded to the Theatre has a multiplier effect of allowing us to operate, present shows and attractions, and contributes to the general economy.

The restoration of the MOCA budget will have a direct bearing on the Hawaii Theatre, and will allow us to continue to operate and deliver programs for over 100,000 Oahu residents and visitors annually, 5,000 public school students and 50 local non-profit performing arts and civic organizations.

The Hawaii Theatre has been in a long partnership with the City and County of Honolulu addressing not only the preservation of a cultural landmark in downtown Honolulu, Providing the second-largest performance venue in the State, offering a wide array of attractions, but very specifically serving as the catalyst for the economic and cultural revitalization of Downtown/Chinatown.

Hawaii Theatre Center

May 18, 2009

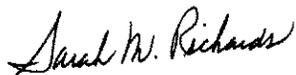
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Use of the City funds are vital components in helping us to keep the doors open, providing employment for local artists and provides a facility widely used by many organizations to present Hawaiian shows, ballet, children's programs, Broadway entertainment, classical music and plays.

The Theatre is very fiscally conservative and has operated in a prudent manner since reopening in 1996. Recently, we were recognized by the Non-Profit Finance Fund, an organization which analyzes non-profit financial operations and noted that the Theatre was a model for others.

I thank you for restoring the MOCA budget, as it will allow our lights to shine brightly as we greatly enhance the economic and cultural life our our great city.

Thank you very much for your consideration.



Sarah M. Richards

President

Hawaii Theatre Center

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