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Statement by George D. Szigeti, President and CEO, Hawai'i Tourism Authority

RE: Hawai'i's Visitor Statistics Results for First Quarter and March 2018

HONOLULU – George D. Szigeti, president and CEO of the Hawai'i Tourism Authority (HTA), issued the following statement regarding Hawai'i's visitor statistics results for the first quarter and March 2018.

“The first quarter results reflect the strong pace that Hawai'i's tourism industry has been able to maintain through each of the first three months. Hawai'i continued to do well in the major categories that indicate how tourism is strengthening the state's economy, visitor spending, generated state tax revenue, visitor arrivals, and air seat capacity.

“The \$4.82 billion in visitor spending statewide is 10.1 percent ahead of last year's record-setting pace through the first quarter and has also generated \$563 million in tax revenue for the state, an increase of nearly \$52 million. All four island counties saw the benefits of increased visitor spending in the first quarter, with the results for March being particularly outstanding, especially on the neighbor islands. This is money that is being circulated throughout the economy in activities, restaurants, retail shops, grocery stores and service providers. Ultimately, this is strengthening jobs for families statewide.

“We are truly fortunate that there continues to be such strong travel demand for the Hawaiian Islands from around the world and that airlines are responding accordingly. Air seat capacity to Hawai'i was up 10.5 percent in the first quarter and 11.6 percent in the month of March. That rate of growth is phenomenal and is not only providing visitors with more travel options to vacation in Hawai'i but also giving our residents more choices when making trips to either side of the Pacific.

“Mahalo to all of Hawai'i's travel industry partners on all islands for contributing to the success of the first quarter. We have the greatest, most welcoming tradition of hospitality in the world and it all stems from the goodwill of the aloha spirit and the warmth that we share with one another and with the visitors who come here to experience how we live and celebrate life.”

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