



For Immediate Release: June 24, 2021  
HTA Release (21-17)

## **HTA Releases Results from 2021 Resident Sentiment Survey**

**HONOLULU** – The Hawai'i Tourism Authority (HTA) released the results of its Spring 2021 Resident Sentiment Survey during its June Board of Directors meeting today. The survey found that while many are concerned with the visitor industry's growth, the majority of Hawai'i residents believe that tourism is worth the issues associated with the industry.

Residents were asked: "In 2019, visitors spent nearly \$18 billion in Hawai'i, which produced \$2 billion in state tax revenues to support local schools, hospitals, and infrastructure. Do you think tourism is worth the issues associated with the industry?" More than 75 percent of Hawai'i residents statewide said "yes," with 78 percent of O'ahu residents answering "yes," along with 73 percent of Hawai'i Island residents, 70 percent of Maui County residents, and 70 percent of Kaua'i residents. When broken down by demographics, the highest percentage of respondents who said they do not think tourism is worth the issues came from residents 18-34 years old and those who have lived in Hawai'i for less than one year.

Residents were also asked questions regarding overall tourism management efforts, and the results were mixed. Just under half (44%) of statewide residents provided a positive (i.e., rating of 6 to 10) or "don't know" rating in their agreement that "I feel like tourism is being better managed on my island." Of the four counties, those on Kaua'i had the highest percentage of positive responses (46%) to that statement.

The survey results also revealed what is most important to residents when it comes to specific tourism management strategies. The highest percentage of residents said that it is extremely or somewhat important to educate visitors and residents to mālama the islands and each other (88%), to eliminate illegal vacation rentals on my island (76%), and to charge visitor access fees to state parks and trails (71%).

Regarding overall resident sentiment towards tourism, the survey found that initiatives that grow the economic and quality of life benefits of tourism, integrated with managed tourism efforts, can help to improve resident sentiment the most. When compared to the 2020 survey results, fewer residents felt that the tourism industry creates many well-paying jobs or jobs that have opportunities for advancement. Fewer residents also felt that the tourism industry enhances residents' quality of life.

HTA's Tourism Research Division contracted Omnitrak Group, Inc. to conduct the survey, which was done from April 27 through June 3, 2021. Residents in all four counties participated in the survey by phone and online. This round was conducted as a request by HTA's board and will be followed by focus groups.

The results of the 2021 survey are compared to HTA's last Resident Sentiment Survey, which was done from September 16 through October 25, 2020, in the middle of the COVID-19 pandemic and just as Hawai'i's Safe Travels program got underway, allowing travelers with a valid negative COVID-19 test to bypass the state's mandatory quarantine.

The 2021 Resident Sentiment Survey is available on HTA's website:  
[www.hawaiiitourismauthority.org/research/evaluation-performance-measures/](http://www.hawaiiitourismauthority.org/research/evaluation-performance-measures/)

###

**About the Hawai'i Tourism Authority**

The [Hawai'i Tourism Authority](#) is the State of Hawai'i agency responsible for strategically managing its support of the tourism industry. Established in 1998 to support Hawai'i's leading industry and largest employer, HTA continually strives to help ensure tourism's sustainability and the benefits it brings to residents and communities statewide.

For more information about HTA, please visit [www.hawaii tourism authority.org](http://www.hawaii tourism authority.org). Follow updates from HTA (@HawaiiHTA) on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), [Twitter](#) and its new [YouTube Channel](#).

For more information, contact:

Marisa Yamane  
Director of Communications & PR  
Hawai'i Tourism Authority  
[Marisa.Yamane@gohta.net](mailto:Marisa.Yamane@gohta.net)

Jennifer Chun  
Director of Tourism Research  
Hawai'i Tourism Authority  
[Jennifer@gohta.net](mailto:Jennifer@gohta.net)