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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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VISITOR INDUSTRY CONTINUED TO RECOVER IN MARCH 2022

Total Visitor Arrivals Reached 84.9 percent of March 2019 Levels

HONOLULU – According to preliminary visitor statistics released by the Department of Business, Economic Development and Tourism (DBEDT) total spending by visitors who came to the islands in March 2022 was \$1.53 billion, which was higher compared to the \$1.49 billion (+2.5%) reported for March 2019.

Prior to the global COVID-19 pandemic and Hawai'i's quarantine requirements for travelers, the State of Hawai'i achieved record-level visitor expenditures and arrivals in 2019 through February 2020. Due to concerns about the rapid surge of COVID cases worldwide and the limitations of Hawai'i's health care system, on March 17, 2020 Hawai'i Gov. David Ige asked visitors to postpone their trips to Hawai'i for at least 30 days. The counties also began issuing stay-at-home orders. On March 26, 2020, the state implemented a 14-day mandatory travel quarantine. Subsequently, nearly all trans-Pacific and interisland flights were canceled, cruise ship activities were suspended and tourism to the islands all but shut down. This continued until mid-October 2020 when the state initiated the Safe Travels program, which allowed trans-Pacific travelers to bypass the quarantine if they had a valid negative test for COVID-19.

Through March 25, 2022, domestic passengers could bypass the State's mandatory five-day self-quarantine if they were up to date on their vaccination or with a negative COVID-19 pre-travel test result from a Trusted Testing Partner through the Safe Travels program. The Safe Travels Program ended on March 25, 2022, and domestic pre-travel requirements ceased as of March 26, 2022. Passengers arriving on direct international flights were subjected to federal U.S. entry requirements which included proof of an up-to-date vaccination document and negative COVID-19 test result taken within one day of travel or documentation of having recovered from COVID-19 in the past 90 days, prior to their flight.

Visitor Spending and Visitor Arrivals

A total of 788,931 visitors came to the Hawaiian Islands in March 2022, with 785,715 visitors arriving by air service, mainly from the U.S. West and U.S. East. In comparison, 928,849 visitors (-15.1%) arrived by air and by cruise ships in March 2019.

The average daily census¹ was 226,857 visitors in March 2022 compared to 250,528 visitors (-9.4%) in March 2019.

In March 2022, 452,752 visitors arrived by air from the U.S. West compared to 399,049 visitors (+13.5%) in March 2019. U.S. West visitors spent \$805.5 million in March 2022 compared to \$578.1 million (+39.3%) in March 2019. Daily spending by U.S. West visitors in March 2022 (\$215 per person) was much higher compared to March 2019 (\$176 per person, +22.4%).

There were 233,286 visitors from the U.S. East in March 2022 compared to 225,648 visitors (+3.4%) in March 2019. U.S. East visitors spent \$507.0 million in March 2022 compared to \$404.5 million (+25.3%) in March 2019. Daily spending by U.S. East visitors in March 2022 (\$237 per person) increased in comparison to March 2019 (\$201 per person, +17.8%).

There were 4,038 visitors from Japan in March 2022 compared to 133,858 visitors (-97%) in March 2019. Visitors from Japan spent \$11.8 million in March 2022 compared to \$185.2 million (-93.6%) in March 2019. Daily spending by Japanese visitors in March 2022 (\$224 per person) decreased compared to March 2019 (\$238 per person, -5.6%).

In March 2022, 54,475 visitors arrived from Canada compared to 76,913 visitors (-29.2%) in March 2019. Visitors from Canada spent \$116.1 million in March 2022, compared to \$139.8 million (-16.9%) in March 2019. Daily spending by Canadian visitors in March 2022 (\$173 per person) increased compared to March 2019 (\$158 per person, +9.7%).

There were 41,164 visitors from All Other International Markets in March 2022. These visitors were from Europe, Oceania, Other Asia, Latin America, Guam, Philippines, and the Pacific Islands. In comparison, there were 81,558 visitors (-49.5%) from All Other International Markets in March 2019.

In March 2022, a total of 5,573 trans-Pacific flights with 1,161,904 seats serviced the Hawaiian Islands, compared to 5,445 flights with 1,192,137 seats in March 2019.

Through the first quarter of 2022, total visitor spending was \$4.23 billion, a decrease of 5.8 percent from the first quarter of 2019 at \$4.49 billion.

A total of 1,993,761 visitors arrived in the first quarter of 2022 which was a decrease from the first quarter of 2019 at 2,527,277 visitors (-21.1%).

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Statement by DBEDT Director Mike McCartney

International travelers in March 2022 contributed to the increase in visitor arrivals, with Canadian visitors at the highest arrival levels since March 2020. Slight percentage increase of Japanese visitors continues to build with the resumption of Japan tour packages to our state.

Inflation continues to grow and the war in Ukraine persists, which affects energy prices and household expenses. We will watch how this impacts the visitor industry and our economy, however, we are hopeful as we are still seeing a positive upswing due to domestic travel and the return of international visitors.

The demand for quality lodging, food and beverage, activities, retail, and services will provide the momentum necessary for the state's economic recovery to happen quicker than predicted.

¹ Average daily census measures the number of visitors present on any given day.

COVID-19 continues to exist within our neighborhoods and globally, so as a community we must continue with safe health practices and constant awareness of how quickly the virus can spread.

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