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Hawai'i Capital Cultural Coalition Announces Publication of National Heritage Area Feasibility Study

Honolulu, HI - Over fifty leaders from arts and cultural organizations and institutions, businesses, city and state government, and other interested individuals gathered to celebrate Hawai'i Capital Cultural Coalition's (HCCC) completion of the partners' National Heritage Area Feasibility Study. The announcement took place in the heart of the proposed Hawai'i Capital National Heritage Area at Hawai'i's oldest residence, Washington Place, home to Queen Lili'uokalani. The long-awaited publication is an integral step in the application process to become designated as a National Heritage Area by the U.S. Congress. The study was conducted in 2006/07 in accordance with National Park Service (NPS) Guidelines.

HCCC's feasibility study will be presented to Congress by Senator Daniel Inouye, with support from Senator Daniel Akaka, Representative Neil Abercrombie, and Representative Mazie Hirono. Submission of a bill to designate the Hawai'i Capital National Heritage Area is planned for January 2009.

Of the 40 National Heritage Areas established to date, only a few are west of the Mississippi River. Hawai'i's unique history and multi-cultural heritage, reinforces the proposed NHA as an important addition to the existing list of areas. Acknowledgment of Hawai'i as integral to the historical memory and cultural landscape of the nation is one of the conditions of the study.

"A National Heritage Area is a grass roots community partnership that involves collaboration around our diverse heritage and culture. Receiving a designation for the historic core of Honolulu would be a major step towards preserving our cultural, natural, historic and recreational resources. With this designation we can further education about, and access to, our cultural and historical

treasures for the benefit of our residents and visitors.” said Mona Abadir, president of the HCCC board of directors.

“Our coalition’s goal is to create a platform for people to tell their personal stories and those of our ancestors in an effort to strengthen our cultural identities and values; it is on the shoulders of others before us that we stand today,” says Abadir.

National Heritage Areas are supported through the National Park Service, but locally managed; the National Park Service has no regulatory authority over the designation. National Heritage Areas are eligible for federal funding of up to \$10 million over ten to fifteen years, with a maximum of \$1 million per year. A one to one match of non-federal resources is required. These funds can be utilized for educational programs, historic preservation and conservation, support of cultural sites and activities, cultural recognition of Hawai‘i through unified marketing efforts, and other initiatives that nurture and celebrate the heritage of the area.

Other National Heritage Areas have demonstrated the designation promotes culture and heritage tourism, resulting in economic benefits from additional visitor spending. The proposed Hawai‘i Capital National Heritage Area is rich with cultural sites, museums, historic buildings, art galleries, performing arts venues, ethnic markets and restaurants offering a fascinating array of heritage activities and experiences.

“We are incredibly grateful to the many partners who have supported this effort to date and remind others that this is an inclusive process, anyone is welcome to participate.” said Abadir. The Hawai‘i Capital Cultural Coalition will be asking those interested to offer testimony to Congress in support of this important legislation.

The feasibility study Project Director was Mona Abadir, HCCC board President, Honu Group Inc., and Project Manager was Lorraine Lunow- Luke, HCCC Coordinator. Project research was lead by a team of specialists from the University of Hawai‘i, Native Hawaiian Hospitality Association, and Hawai‘i Capital Cultural Coalition. Professor William R. Chapman, Director of the Graduate Program in Historic Preservation at the University of Hawai‘i was the lead researcher and study author. T. Lulani Arquette, Executive Director of the Native Hawaiian Hospitality Association, and Peter Apo, NaHHA board of directors, oversaw the Hawaiian cultural inventory, Hawaiian history,

and cultural review panels. Socio-economic and environmental research was conducted by Professor Karl Kim, University of Hawaii Department of Urban and Regional Planning. Additional expertise came from the HCCC board of directors, coalition members, other local cultural experts, the Cultural+Planning Group, and the National Park Service Honolulu office. A complete listing of the study team and participants is available in the report and brochure on line.

The study was funded by a major grant from the Hawai'i Tourism Authority. Additional funding was provided by the Department of Business Economic Development & Tourism, Honu Group Inc., Alexander & Baldwin Foundation, Atherton Family Foundation, Kamehameha Schools, Ko Olina Station & Center, Ko Olina Resort Association, Eight Inc., Unlimited Construction Services, Hard Rock Honolulu, and HonBlue. In addition, in-kind support and volunteer hours were donated by the Hawai'i Capital Cultural Coalition partners.

The Hawai'i Capital Cultural Coalition, a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization, seeks to strengthen the rich heritage and cultural assets of Honolulu's historic core to enhance quality of life and generate economic development for Hawai'i by fostering connections that support and promote the area's arts and cultural institutions; educate about and preserve Hawai'i's heritage; enhance the visitor and resident experience of the area; and encourage appropriate cultural and heritage tourism.

For more information on the Hawai'i Capital Cultural Coalition, its National Heritage Area initiative and a free on line copy of the feasibility study, or to participate in the coalition – please visit: www.Hawaiicapitalculture.org or email: hcccinfo@Hawaiicapitalculture.org. **Hi Res Photo available upon request**



Hawai'i Capital Cultural Coalition – Hawai'i Capital National Heritage Area Feasibility
Study Announcement Attendees, Washington Place, Honolulu, Hawai'i